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PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
AMERICAN
JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

No. 8.



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1900

AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

ORGANIZED AT NEW YORK, JUNE 7, 1892.

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All communications should be addressed to the Corresponding Secretary, DR. HERBERT FRIEDENWALD, 943 K St. N. W., Washington City, U. S. A.

OBJECTS.

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The object of this Society is to collect and publish material bearing upon the history of our country. It is known that Jews in Spain and Portugal participated in some degree in the voyages which led to the discovery of America, and that there were Jews from Holland, Great Britain, Jamaica and other countries among the earliest settlers of several of the colonies. There were also a number of Jews in the Continental army, and others contributed liberally to defray the expenses of the Revolutionary war. Since the foundation of our government a number of Jews have held important public positions. The genealogy of these men and the record of their achievements will, when gathered together, be of value and interest to the historian and perchance contribute materially to the history of our country.

The objects for which this Society was organized are not sectarian but American. The co-operation of students of history and of all persons who have an interest in the work of this Society is cordially invited.

SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING.

The sixth annual meeting of the Society was held in New York, at the Assembly Rooms of the Temple Emanuel, December 29-30, 1897. A large number of persons was in attendance at the various sessions.

The presence of the venerable Judge Daly, the pioneer worker in the history of the settlement of Jews in America, being noticed by the President, he was escorted to the platform and made a few remarks indicative of his interest in the Society's work.

The meeting for the transaction of business was held on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 29, 1897.

The President delivered his annual address, and the Secretary presented a report, stating that the work of the Society exhibited satisfactory progress during the year, and a gratifying increase of interest has been shown, both on the part of its membership, as well as by scholars in various parts of the world not connected with the Society.

Valuable original documents have been brought to our attention by the Rev. Joseph M. Corcos of Curaçao; Dr. S. Schechter of Cambridge, England, and our Vice-President, Mr. Mendes Cohen.

There are at present 215 members, consisting of 6 honorary members, 12 corresponding members, 3 life members, and 194 ordinary members. The Society has lost by death, during the year, Mr. Louis Schnabel of New York, Mr. Jacob Sulzberger of Philadelphia, and Rev. Dr. S. Morais of Philadelphia.

One publication, number 6 of the series, containing the papers read at the last annual meeting, held at Baltimore,

was published. The amount of material on hand for publication is considerably in excess of the funds available for that purpose, and it is extremely desirable that a special publication fund be provided.

Mr. William Jones Salomon has donated to the Society \$100 for the purpose of enabling the Society to distribute its publications free to College and University Libraries in this country. A distribution under this fund is now proceeding.

Mr. Simon W. Rosendale reported to the Society upon the question of incorporation, and it was voted that the Society be incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia.

The following officers were elected: President, Honorable Oscar S. Straus; Vice-Presidents, Honorable Simon W. Rosendale, Mendes Cohen, Esq., and Professor Charles Gross; Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Cyrus Adler; Recording Secretary, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald; Treasurer, Professor Richard Gottheil.

Additional members of the Executive Council are: Dr. B. Felsenthal, Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr., Honorable Mayer Sulzberger, N. Taylor Phillips, Honorable Simon Wolf, Dr. J. H. Hollander, Max J. Kohler, John Samuel, and Dr. David Philipson.

On December 30, 1897, the Council presented to the Society an amendment to the Constitution increasing the number of Vice-Presidents from 3 to 4. This was unanimously carried; and, on motion of Dr. Adler, Professor Herbert B. Adams was elected the fourth Vice-President.

On Wednesday evening, December 29, the members attended a reception tendered to the Society by the Honorable and Mrs. Oscar S. Straus.

The following papers were presented at the meeting:

I. *Biographical Sketch of Commodore Uriah P. Levy*, by Honorable Simon Wolf, Washington, D. C.

II. *Phases in the History of Religious Liberty in America, with Special Reference to the Jews*, by Max J. Kohler, Esq., New York.

III. *Jacob Philadelphia—Mystic and Physicist*, by Mr. Julius F. Sachse, Philadelphia.

IV. *Site of the First Shearith Israel Synagogue in New York, with Maps and Drawings*, by Mr. Albion Morris Dyer.

V. *Lewis Gomez, a Colonial Jew; and his Descendants*, by N. Taylor Phillips, LL. B., New York.

VI. *Documents Relating to the First Congregation in North America*, by Rev. Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, New York.

VII. *Note on Jacob Henry and the Gratz Family*, by Honorable Mayer Sulzberger, Philadelphia. (Presented by Dr. Adler.)

VIII. *New York Jews in the Struggle for American Independence*, by Leon Hühner, Esq., New York.

IX. *A Youthful Philanthropic Hero*, by Rev. A. H. Nieto, New York.

X. *Some Early American Zionist Projects*, by Max J. Kohler, Esq., New York.

Not read at the meeting :

XI. *Jewish Pioneers of the Ohio Valley*, by Rev. Dr. David Philipson of Cincinnati.

XII. *Documents from Curaçao*, by Rev. J. M. Corcos, Curaçao.

XIII. *A Brave Frontiersman*, by Rev. Henry Cohen, Galveston, Texas.

XIV. *Ezra Stiles and the Jews of Newport*, by Rev. W. Willner, Meridian, Miss.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

The seventh annual meeting of the Society was held in Philadelphia, at Witherspoon Hall, on December 26, 1898, 70 persons being in attendance. In the absence of the President, the Honorable Simon W. Rosendale presided. A letter was presented from the Honorable Oscar S. Straus resigning the office of President of the Society, in view of his absence from the country as United States Minister to Turkey. In presenting this letter, Mr. Rosendale remarked upon the great services rendered to the Society by Mr. Straus, and expressed his confidence that in his new field of usefulness he would so distinguish himself in our country's service that his career would furnish ample and valuable material for the future historian. It was unanimously resolved that the Secretary prepare an appropriate expression of the appreciation of the Society for the labors of Mr. Straus in its behalf.

The Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Cyrus Adler, reported that the Society numbered 216 members, consisting of 6 honorary, 12 corresponding, 4 life and 194 regular members. During the year, the Society had lost by death one member, Isidor Bush, and a generous friend, Lazarus Straus.

The Recording Secretary, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald, reported that the Society was incorporated as directed, in the District of Columbia, on December 19, 1898, Simon Wolf, Cyrus Adler and Herbert Friedenwald being the incorporators. He also reported by direction of the Council, the fact that Dr. Hollander had been requested to collect details respecting the names, ranks and services of Jews who served in the Army and Navy during the Spanish-

The Treasurer, Dr. Gottheil, presented the following report:

Dr.		Cr.	
To Bal. Knic. Trust Co.		Printing Publications,	
Oct. 1, 1897	\$724.34	No. 6.....	\$397.51
Dues from Members..	800.00	Miscell. Printing and	
Back Dues.....	95.00	Stationery.....	48.51
Two Life Memberships	200.00	Clerical Services	54.12
W. Salomon, Esq.	100.00	Copying of MSS.....	60.00
Brentano's (Sale of		Insurance	16.80
Publications).....	28.00	Janitorial Services...	4.90
Interest, K. T. C. (to			
Dec. 3, 1897).....	3.86		\$581.84
Interest, K. T. C. (to			
June 30, 1898).....	6.34		
Interest, A. S. B. (Jan.			
1898).....	16.43		
Interest, A. S. B. (July			
1898).....	21.10		
Total Receipts.....	\$1995.07		
Total Expenditure.	581.84		
Balance.....	\$1413.23		

Balance in K. T. Company	\$1047.93
Deposited in Albany Sav. Bank (Int.)... ..	37.53
“ “ “ “ “ “	300.00
Cash in hands of Treasurer.... ..	27.77
Former Deposit in Albany Sav. Bank.....	805.47
Present Deposit in Albany Sav. Bank.....	1143.00

Mr. Leon Hühner and Mr. Jessie Straus of New York, were appointed a committee to audit the Treasurer's report.

A vote of thanks was extended to the Committee on Dutch Records for the thorough manner in which they presented the results of their investigation.

The presiding officer appointed Mr. Charles J. Cohen, Mr. Joseph Blumenthal and Mr. Louis I. Waldman a Committee on Nominations. They reported the following officers for the ensuing year, who were unanimously elected :

President, Dr. Cyrus Adler; Vice-Presidents, Honorable Simon W. Rosendale, Mendes Cohen, Esq., Professor Charles Gross and Professor H. B. Adams; Treasurer, Professor Richard Gottheil; Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald; Recording Secretary, Dr. J. H. Hollander.

Members of the Executive Council: Honorable Oscar S. Straus, Dr. B. Felsenthal, Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr., Honorable Mayer Sulzberger, Honorable N. Taylor Phillips, Honorable Simon Wolf, Max J. Kohler, Esq., John Samuel, Esq., Rev. Dr. David Philipson and Rev. Henry Cohen.

The following papers were presented :

I. *Report of the Committee on Dutch Records*, by Honorable Simon W. Rosendale, Albany, and Max J. Kohler, Esq., New York.

II. *Contribution to the History of Jews in Surinam*, by Professor Richard Gottheil, Columbia University, New York.

III. *Some Early American Jewish Poets, Actors and Dramatists*, by Max J. Kohler, New York.

IV. *Mexican Jewish History*. (a) *The Legend of the Jew and the Virgin's Picture*. (b) *List of Jewish Heretics Executed in the Cathedral*, by Rev. Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, New York.

V. *Did the First Jewish Settlers of New York Come from Brazil?* by Leon Hühner, Esq., New York.

VI. *Notes on the Jews of Jamaica*, by Max J. Kohler, New York.

VII. *Information Respecting Isaac Levy of Georgia, and Notes on Joseph Simon, Levy Andrew Levy and other Pennsylvania Jews*, by Dr. Herbert Friedenwald, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

VIII. *Notes on Jewish Cemeteries in New York, and Notes on Colonial Jews*, by Miss Elvira N. Solis of New York. (Presented by Dr. S. Solis-Cohen.)

IX. *An Account of the Paris Sanhedrin Published in Mexico, 1807*, by Professor Richard Gottheil, Columbia University, New York.

X. *Asser Levy, a Noted Jewish Burgher of New Amsterdam*, by Leon Hühner, New York.

XI. *Additional Documents Relating to Jews and the Inquisition in Mexico*, by Dr. Cyrus Adler, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Address of the President. <i>Hon. Oscar S. Straus</i> ,.....	1
Asser Levy, A Noted Jewish Burgher of New Amsterdam. <i>Leon Hühner, A. M., LL. B.</i>	9
Site of the First Synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. <i>Albion Morris Dyer</i> ,.....	25
The Jewish Pioneers of the Ohio Valley. <i>David Philipson, D. D.</i> ,..	43
A Brave Frontiersman. <i>Rev. Henry Cohen</i> ,.....	59
Some Early American Zionist Projects. <i>Max J. Kohler, A. M., LL. B.</i>	75
Ezra Stiles and the Jews. <i>Rev. W. Willner</i> ,.....	119
Notes on Myer Hart and Other Jews of Easton, Pennsylvania. <i>Gustavus N. Hart</i> ,.....	127
Some References to Early Jewish Cemeteries in New York City. <i>Elvira N. Solis</i> ,.....	135
Persecution of the Jews in 1840. <i>Jacob Ezekiel</i> ,.....	141
Notes,.....	147
Necrology,.....	149
Index,.....	153
Constitution,	161
List of Members,.....	162

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT,

HON. OSCAR S. STRAUS.

Members and Friends of the American Jewish Historical Society :

Last year, at the annual meeting, held in Baltimore, I could not be with you, as I was compelled to seek rest. Availing myself of this enforced excuse, I resolved upon a trip to the Old World, which always has new messages to impart to the mind open to historical truths. While in London and Paris I had hoped to devote some time to make researches with a view of tracing the careers and works of some of the American refugees who, in the early part of the Seventeenth Century, to escape the blood-hounds of the "Holy Office" in the New World, recrossed the Atlantic, to find more tolerant treatment in Italy, Holland and in the dominions of the Ottoman Empire. The inclemency of the weather in London and Paris was such that I had to abandon this purpose, and move further south to find the "oriental sunbeams." I refer to this subject with the hope that some of our members may follow up this line of research, as I feel quite confident that it will yield rich returns in important material.

The causes that contribute to the advance of liberty are only in part such as germinate from within a nation; they are also such as are superinduced from without, the latter being often more active than the former. The Inquisition in Spain and Portugal worked moral degradation and national ruin within those countries, yet the refugees it forced into exile contributed to the moral elevation and material advancement of the nations among whom they sought shelter.

The formation of the Dutch Republic was perhaps more directly due to the necessity for united effort to check the advancing power of intolerant Spain than to the rising spirit of liberty among the Protestants of the Netherlands.

The Laudian persecutions of the English Puritans quickened the spirit of liberty in New England and supplied the men best equipped and who had the will to make the sacrifices which that work required. The intolerance of the New England Puritans in turn, in the opposition it aroused, laid the beginnings of American liberty, and under the guidance of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, contributed to the solution of the problem of soul-liberty, by separating Church and State.

Two weeks of my stay abroad were passed in Spain, that land whose history is so full of glory and suffering for the children of Israel. I found it a country whose ruins yet bear evidences of a resplendent past, but they are buried beneath the debris of an unpromising present and a hopeless future. It is a land Providence has blessed with a temperate and healthful climate and a fruitful soil, but from which bad government has driven commerce and has pauperized the masses of the people. There are only a few faint traces of the once learned, prosperous and enterprising Sephardim; here and there one meets with their names, borne by families, many of whom in the vicissitude of their misfortunes have lost even the traces of their origin. To the students of Spanish Jewish history these names recall the glories of the golden age of Spain, when her power ranked first among the nations of the world.

While in Madrid, I had the pleasure of meeting her distinguished publicist and statesman Señor Emilio Castelar, who in 1873 was President of Spain during the brief period of the Republic. He presented me with a copy of his recent work the History of the Discovery of America.* I was

* *Historia del Descubrimiento de America.* Madrid, 1892.

curious to see what reference, if any, he had made to the participation of the Jews in the voyages which led to the discovery of our hemisphere. Miss Mary Marx of New York, an accomplished Spanish scholar, carefully examined the book for me and extracted the following passages, which are the only ones bearing upon the subject. They refer to traditions rather than to historical data. He says: "So also do the Jewish writers draw great advantage for Israel from the books and charts tending to throw light on the dark seas and mysterious continents. Menasseh Ben Israel, for example, tells us that the ten tribes led into captivity by Salmanasar in the reign of King Hosea while encamping on the banks of the Euphrates, unanimously resolved to go beyond the seas to remote regions, for the better observance of their laws free from all idolatry. And therefore when they entered the narrowest part of the Assyrian River the Lord worked for them wonders and wrought miracles, even arresting the flow of the river, so that they might cross over in safety and go into regions which the rabbinical writers believe to correspond with Mexico and Peru. Another philosopher, Genebrardo, who in the 16th century was the author of a 'rabbinical introduction,' written to facilitate an advantageous study of Hebrew literature, commenting on the journey of the Ten Tribes, states that the land of Arsaveth where the prophet locates the reunion of the Ten Tribes is really Further Tartary, and that from Tartary they went to Greenland, and that from Greenland they intended to cross Davis Straits to Labrador, 'which is the land of the Indies,' he says, 'and which is only fifty leagues distant from Greenland.' And the rabbis are not alone satisfied with their Esdras as revealing America, but claim it was also revealed in the words of Isaiah (Chap. XI) which states how the God of Israel called not only the people of Assyria, Egypt and Ethiopia his chosen race but also those of 'the islands of the West.' And the rabbis add to all this, to confirm the secular and very ancient establishment of the

Israelites in the New World, the story of a Portuguese Jew, named Arahón Levi, alias Montesinos, who certified having traveled on mule-back through the plateaus and mountains of the Andes and met there some native muleteers, who related to him how they unhappily had inflicted on a very holy people in America the same misfortunes they were themselves now compelled to suffer at the hands of the Spaniards. Montesinos wished to see the people of whom the muleteers thus spoke, and they discovering that he was an Israelite conducted him for a period of eight days along a broad and deep river to a place on its banks known to them. There they stopped and unfurling a cotton flag, signaled with it; whereupon could be seen similar answering signals, announcing the arrival of a woman and three men who recited the fourth verse of the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy; hereupon they marched up the river and there came four more with the same song on their lips and with the same general characteristics, all of which indicated there existed a Hebrew tribe in that region; and though the traveler had, through his companions, given every indication of good faith they declined to have closer relations with him; but withdrew within their defined limits, because perhaps of a suspicion of religious antagonism. Such are some of the radiant wild and confused stories that are everywhere current regarding the New World."

Señor Castelar is a bachelor, but seems none the less happy in his comfortable apartments in Madrid surrounded by his books and with his secretary. While not appearing over sixty he can perhaps be correctly called "the grand old man" of Spain. He is of medium height, polite and gracious in bearing, and of charming personality. He is an orator of magnetic power and fiery fluency; this influence while great is greater among the people than in the Cortes of which he is again a member. In the course of conversation he impressed upon me that he was still a Republican, but that the people of Spain are not adapted for a popular

government; they confound it with anarchy, they know how to tear down but not to build up. They do not understand the conservative power of popular government; that it too must exact strict obedience to its laws and place limitations on personal actions.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Spain, of all states since the fall of the Roman Empire, was most successful in extending her dominion by colonization, and least successful in permanently attaching such colonies to herself. The reason for this lies in the fact that her main purpose in planting colonies was to replete the home treasury at every cost, regardless of the welfare of her subjects. The farther off such colonies were from Spain the more gold they were expected to yield to the Torre del Oro (Tower of Gold) which still stands in Seville on the banks of the Guadalquivir. In Columbus's time this tower is said to have been the depot for treasures brought by the fleets from the New World.

The Jews have been specially active as colonizers, not because of innate restlessness nor because of a commercial spirit, but because in countries where they have suffered most from restrictions and persecutions they have been among the first to avail of this avenue of escape from tyranny and go to the remotest unsettled portions of the world to enjoy liberties denied to them at home. The Jews and commerce are found continually associated in foreign and colonial trade, not because the Jews were continually in search for new highways of commerce, but because commerce and the Jews, the former by natural laws and the latter by artificial laws followed the path of least restriction.

Mr. Lucien Wolf, the late president of the Jewish Historical Society of England, in his instructive paper read before that society in February last, on "American Elements in Re-Settlement," draws attention to the relation just referred to in respect to the re-admission of the Jews in England under Cromwell. In 1654 the Portuguese reconquered Brazil from the Dutch and brought ruin upon the

flourishing Jewish communities of Pernambuco, Recife, and Bahia. From Recife alone, Mr. Wolf states, five thousand Jews were expelled. The fugitives fled partly to Surinam, then a British colony, and partly back to Amsterdam under the lead of their rabbi Isaac Aboab. Mr. Wolf points out that in 1651 Long Parliament having passed the Navigation Act, which act was chiefly aimed at Amsterdam then the counting-house of Europe, a great many of the Dutch merchants, largely Jews, having trade relations with Jamaica, Barbados and other British colonies, in order not to be debarred under the act, settled in London. Martinez Dormido, otherwise known as David Abarbanel, who was in the Brazil trade and had been ruined by the sacking of Pernambuco, came to London to petition the Protector for the readmission of the Jews. Not succeeding in this appeal, he sent for his brother-in-law, Menasseh Ben Israel. Mr. Wolf states, "the only point in it I desire to emphasize now is that without its American impulses it (the readmission of the Jews into England) would not have occurred, or at any rate would have occurred differently."

An interesting contribution to American Jewish history during the present year was the publication of a monograph by Rev. Joseph M. Coros, Minister of the Congregation "Mikveh Israel" in Curaçao, giving a synopsis of the history of the Jews of Curaçao from their settlement to the present time. This settlement was begun in 1650, sixteen years after Curaçao became a Dutch province, when twelve Jewish families arrived there from Holland and four years later it was augmented by refugees from Brazil when the Portuguese retook the country from the Dutch and expelled the Jews. Mr. Corcos states, that this community grew in number, influence and importance and to this day many of their direct descendants are still in Curaçao holding distinguished positions in the island. In the year 1656 the community formed a congregation which they named "Mikveh Israel" (The Hope of Israel) which congregation still

prosper and of which he is the rabbi. The author states that in 1693 about ninety Israelites left the island and set sail for America. Some of these families settled at New Port, among whom were Hasan Ishaack de Abraham Touro the father of the philanthropist Judah Touro. In the same year a number of Curaçaoan Jews, mostly those of Italian origin, emigrated to Venezuela. They had originally come from Leghorn to Cayenne under a permission granted in 1659 to David Cohen Nassi by the West India Company. But after the war with Portugal the Jews were subjected to harassing restrictions or expelled, so they emigrated to Curaçao, and from there as stated they went to Tucacas in Venezuela where they formed a congregation known as "Santa Irmandade."

Many other matters of interest are referred to in this pamphlet, and I desire to express the hope that we may succeed in having the other settlements of the South and Central American countries written up in the light of the existing original records.

It has not been my purpose in these annual addresses to do more than refer in a general and I hope suggestive way to the lines of our investigations. The American Jewish Historical Society has a specialized field of history to explore. It is our object as well as our duty to make thorough investigations. As we unravel the threads of American Jewish history, it will be found these threads are not insignificant components of the complex woven canvas which portrays the history of our continent. These threads will be found carried in the shuttle, driven by acting and counteracting events, not only crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic, but running all along our coast, binding together in closer trade relations the Puritan colonies of New England with the West Indies, Brazil and other South American countries and adjacent islands.

ASSER LEVY.

A NOTED JEWISH BURGHER OF NEW AMSTERDAM.

BY LEON HÜHNER, A. M., LL. B., *New York.*

The prejudice existing against the Jews during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was not confined to the Old World; in the New World as well men were to be found with strong anti-Jewish feelings.

The sturdy, obstinate Dutchmen that settled at New Amsterdam were, as a body, fair-minded and just, yet not a few among them looked upon the arrival of Jews in the colony with open hostility. As some of these men were high in authority, the lot of the new comers was by no means a pleasant one. The Jews of early New York had to fight their way to respect against deep-rooted prejudice and bigotry.

The opening chapters of New York Jewish history are unpromising indeed. Stuyvesant, the governor, was violently opposed to the little band of Jews that came from Jamaica. Within a fortnight of their arrival he opened a correspondence with the mother country in the hope that he might be permitted to expel them.* His plans, however, were frustrated by orders from Holland, not to interfere with the new comers.† Nor were the reasons that prompted the directors in Holland to act in this way dictated by considerations of liberality or humanity. The main reason

* *Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, edited by Brodhead, vol. XIV, p. 315. Stuyvesant also requested of the Directors "that none of the Jewish nation be permitted to invade New Netherland."

† *Calendar of New York Historical MSS.* (Dutch), p. 281.

given was because Jews in Holland were heavy stockholders in the Dutch West India Company.*

Another enemy of the Jews at this time was the "Shout," or Sheriff of the city, Cornelis van Tienhoven, an unscrupulous and daring man who had worked himself up from being a mere clerk in the company's employ, to the position of authority which he held when the Jews arrived.†

To cope with men like these, a no less keen, bold and daring man was needed. Had all the members of that little company been timid and submissive to insult, like the inhabitants of the Ghetto in the Old World, who can tell whether the Jews would ever have attained the high position in New York which they held prior to the American Revolution?

Fortunately for the Jews, there were in that little band a few men of courage; men who brooked no insult and who were ready to fight for what they deemed the rights of free-men. Foremost among these was Asser Levy, the subject of the present sketch.

Where these early Jews had been domiciled before coming to New York may still be considered doubtful. It seems that the party came from Jamaica by way of Cuba.‡ Some were probably Brazilian refugees while others may have been settled in the West Indies. At all events, not all of the party were Portuguese Jews, for, while some have Portuguese names like DeLucena and Nuñez, others have

* *Documents relating to Col. Hist.*, vol. XIV, p. 315. It appears also that in June, 1656, the Directors wrote to Stuyvesant concerning a Jews' Quarter to be established in New Amsterdam. The idea was, however, soon abandoned. See *Cal. of New York Hist. MSS.* (Dutch), p. 282.

† *Valentine's Manual*, 1852, p. 387.

‡ The writer discussed this subject at length in a paper read at the meeting of the Society in December, 1898, at Philadelphia. The Cape St. Anthony referred to in the records was in all likelihood the important Cuban point, and not the obscure promontory in Brazil.

names decidedly Dutch, like Solomon Pietersen* and Asser Levy Van Swellem.

As the subject of this sketch frequently appears as agent for Amsterdam merchants, it is but reasonable to suppose that Amsterdam was his native town.†

The little party seem to have fared rather badly in the New World. They had probably lost the greater portion of their property before reaching New Netherland, and necessity had compelled them to enter into a hard contract with the captain of the vessel which brought them, whereby each was liable for the freight of all the rest. On their arrival, their goods were at once seized and sold to satisfy the captain's claim.‡

The earliest mention of Asser Levy is to be found in the Court Minutes of New Amsterdam, of September 14, 1654, hardly a week after his arrival. He there appears as plaintiff against a lady of his party, named Ricke Nounes, and sues for money advanced to her in Jamaica.§ Her defense was that she had paid his freight from Jamaica. While this suit was pending the sailors obtained a judgment against Asser Levy under the contract mentioned.||

* *Records of New Amsterdam* (Court Minutes), vol. I, p. 240. "Solomon Pietersen, a Jew, appears in court" as spokesman for his coreligionists. (1654.)

† *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 73.

‡ *Records of New Amsterdam*, edited by Mr. B. Fernow (Court Minutes, Sept. 7, 1654) Vol. I, p. 240; also pp. 241, 244. The principal debtors seem to have been Abraham Israel, Judicq de Mereda, David Israel and Moses Ambrosius.

§ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 242. The name as given in the record is Gamoniké, which the editor, Mr. Fernow, translates "Jamaica." The entry concludes: "The Worshipful Court referred the parties to two arbitrators, Sieur Govert Loockermans and Sieur Johannes De Peyster being appointed as such to examine the accounts and differences on both sides, and if possible to bring about an agreement." The defendant subsequently brought a counter suit. See *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. I, p. 259, &c. Solomon Pietersen appeared as attorney for Ricke Nunes.

|| *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 249. Oct. 5, 1654. John Martya v. Asser Leeven

As the goods of the wealthiest in the company had been ordered to be sold first, and as judgment was not taken against Levy until a month after his arrival, it is but reasonable to conclude that he was among the poorest of the passengers, a supposition which seems to be borne out by a subsequent plea that he has no money with which to pay.*

Fortunately, perhaps, for the Jews, Stuyvesant at this period had little leisure to give them his entire attention. In December, 1654, he went to the West Indies to protest against interference with trade and against the seizure of Dutch vessels by English privateers.†

During his absence the "Shout," Cornelis van Tienhoven, did his best to frighten the new comers from the colony, but in vain.‡

Stuyvesant returned in July, 1655, a much disappointed man; his schemes had miscarried and, to add to his troubles, he found, on his arrival, orders to attack the Swedes on the Delaware. He at once issued orders for the enlistment of all adults in the colony, and as a result, the question was at once raised, "Shall the Jews be enlisted?"§ Several Jews, Asser Levy among them, appear to have been ready to serve. The question was submitted to the governor and council, and an ordinance was passed at Stuyvesant's instance in

Plaintiff sued "as agent for the sailors who brought the Jews here from the West Indies."

* *Ibid.*, p. 254.

† See O'Callahan, *History of New Netherland*, vol. II, p. 286.

‡ *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. I, p. 291. The record reads: "March 1, 1655, Fiscal Cornelis van Tienhoven informed the Burgomaster and Schepens, the Director General and Supreme Council have resolved that the Jews who came last year from the West Indies and now from Fatherland, must prepare to depart forthwith, and that they shall receive notice thereof." It seems that van Tienhoven exceeded his authority in the matter. Nothing was done in regard to this resolution, and it is fair to conclude that this was simply a scheme to frighten away the new comers.

§ See O'Callahan, *History of New Netherland*, vol. II, p. 286.

August, 1655, which recited, "that owing to the disgust and unwillingness of the trainbands to be fellow soldiers with the aforesaid nation, and to be on guard with the same at the guard-house,"* it was declared "that in this grand emporium of New Amsterdam" Jews cannot be permitted to serve as soldiers, but should be exempt. The resolution did not stop here, however, but continued, that for such exemption each male person should pay a monthly contribution of sixty-five stivers.†

When it is considered that at this time, "the grand emporium of New Amsterdam" contained less than a thousand inhabitants,‡ we must indeed smile at the dignified language used.

At this point it is, that Asser Levy came to the front as the champion of his coreligionists. He at once refused to pay the tax and, on November 5, 1655, petitioned for leave to stand guard like other burghers of New Amsterdam or to be relieved from the tax paid by others of his nation.§ From this it would appear that other Jews had paid without demurring. The petition was rejected in November, 1655, with the sharp comment that if he was not satisfied with the law, he might go elsewhere if he liked.||

Nothing, however, was further from Asser Levy's mind than to leave the colony. He probably appealed to Holland, for it subsequently appears that he was permitted to do guard-duty like other citizens.¶

With regard to taxation, however, the Jews were

* *Documents relating to Colonial History*, edited by Brodhead, vol. XII, p. 96. Also Daly, *Settlement of Jews in North America*, p. 16.

† See *Hist. of New Netherland*, by E. B. O'Callahan, vol. II, p. 286. Also Daly, *Settlement of Jews in North America*, p. 16, and *Calendar of New York Historical MSS.* (Dutch), pp. 151, 310.

‡ *Valentine's Manual*, 1857.

§ *Calendar of New York Hist. MSS.*, vol. 1630-1664. p. 155.

|| *Id.*, p. 155.

¶ This also appears from his application for burgher right. See *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. 7, p. 154.

treated with marked equality. They even appear to have been preferred as taxpayers. Thus in September, 1655, a resolution was passed for the purpose of building a defense of planks six feet high, around the city, as a protection against the Indians. The men in authority were allowed to furnish voluntary contributions; thus, Peter Stuyvesant gave 150 florins and De Peyster 50 florins. The Jews, however, were taxed with considerable liberality, Joseph de Coster being taxed 100 florins, and several others to a like amount.* Asser Levy's tax was only six florins,† from which we may conclude that he was not well to do at this time.

It seems that Stuyvesant deliberately violated his instructions with regard to the Jews, for in 1655 the Directors wrote to him, rebuking him severely for his refusal to permit Jews to trade at Fort Orange.‡ As Asser Levy appears as a

* See *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. I, p. 371. Abraham La Cuia, 100 fl.; David Frera, 100 fl.; Salvador Dandrada, 100 fl.; Jacob Cowyn, 100 fl.; also Solomon Pietersen and Jacob Barsimson.

† *Id.*, p. 371. From various items in the court minutes, it would appear that some of the Jews, while not bringing ready cash with them, had balances due them from merchants in Holland which were subsequently paid. This probably accounts for the fact that so many Jews were able to pay a tax of 100 fl. barely eight months after arrival.

It might be interesting to note that about this time Cornelis van Tienhoven suddenly disappeared from the colony, after having been disgraced on account of his connection with several dishonorable transactions. One morning his hat and cane were found floating in the river and all indications pointed to suicide. Unfortunately for him, however, he subsequently turned up elsewhere, and the fine, romantic ending to his career, which he had so carefully planned was rudely exposed. As a reminder of his former presence, he left his wife and children in the colony. See *Valentine's Manual*, 1852, p. 387.

‡ *Settlement of Jews in North America* by Charles P. Daly, p. 22, and authorities cited. Also *Documents relating to Colonial Hist.*, vol. XIV, pp. 341, 351.

prominent trader there shortly afterward* it is not unreasonable to suppose that he was among those who had made complaint on this account.

The needs of the city soon increased considerably, and petitions began to pour in upon the council praying that certain individuals be licensed as butchers. Mr. De Voe, in a volume known as *The Market Book*, informs us that this office was considered one of the most important in the colony. The licenses were restricted to six at first, the individuals had to be chosen, their character certified to and their ability tested.† “Particularly,” says Mr. De Voe, “was this true in the case of the Jews.” Asser Levy was the person selected, and “took the oath that Jews are accustomed to take.”‡

About January, 1657, an ordinance was passed notifying the inhabitants that for certain trade privileges the “burgher right” was absolutely essential. Notice was given on April 9, and two days later Asser Levy appeared in court and requested to be admitted as a burgher.§

The surprise of the officials at such a request may well be imagined. Yet the applicant was not at all disturbed. With perfect confidence he argued his case. In the words of the ancient record, “the Jew claims that such ought not to be refused him as he keeps watch and ward like other burghers, showing a burgher certificate from the city of Amsterdam that the Jew is burgher there.”|| But all argu-

* See “An Early Ownership of Real Estate, &c., by Hon. Simon W. Rosendale. *Pub. Amer. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 61, citing Munsell’s *Collection on the History of Albany*, vol. IV.

† *Valentine’s Manual*, 1868, p. 842.

‡ *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. VII, p. 258. It also appears that he requested “to be excused from killing hogs, as his religion does not allow him to do it, which was granted,” October, 1660.

§ See *The Market Book*, by De Voe, p. 49. Also *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. VII, p. 154.

|| *Records of New Amsterdam* (Administrative Minutes), vol. VII, p. 154.

ment was in vain; "the matter having been deliberated upon, it was decreed as before, that it cannot be allowed and that he shall apply to the Director General and Council."*

He lost no time in bringing the matter before that body. By this time, Stuyvesant and the council had probably recognized the fighting qualities of the applicant, and moreover, Stuyvesant could at this time ill afford to have another complaint lodged against him at Holland. On April 21, 1657, it was accordingly ordered that the burgomaster should admit Jews as burghers.†

Levy's position as butcher, however, seems not to have interfered with his general character as a trader. As early as 1661, he figures as a purchaser of real estate at Albany,‡ the ownership of land probably carrying with it certain trade privileges. In a paper read before the Society some years since, Hon. Simon W. Rosendale, has given the detail of Levy's real estate transactions, and has discovered the interesting fact that our burgher had a surname. His full name, as given in a mortgage executed to him in 1660, is Asser Levy Van Swellem.§

Strangely enough, although Jews were expressly permitted to own real estate as early as 1656,|| no actual conveyance to a Jew in New Amsterdam itself appears earlier than June 8, 1662, a conveyance to Asser Levy, of land on South William Street.¶ During the following year, the same party acquired additional land on South William Street, and also

* *Records of New Amsterdam*, p. 154, April 11, 1657.

† *Cal. of New York Hist. MSS.* (Dutch), p. 184. Also Daly, *The Settlement of the Jews in North America*, p. 22.

‡ *Id.*, p. 16. See Pearson, *Early Records of the City of Albany*, pp. 297, 308, 309, 362, 371, 372, 376, 381.

§ "An Early Ownership of Real Estate in Albany." *Pub. Amer. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 61, and authorities cited.

|| *Documents relating to Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. XIV, p. 351.

¶ *Valentine's Manual*, 1865, p. 691. In June, 1663, there is a conveyance from Wessel Everson to Asser Levy. *Ibidem*, p. 701.

two lots on Mill Lane, subsequently the site of the first Jewish Synagogue.*

Troublesome times were now at hand. The King of England asserted his claim to New Netherland, and donated the territory to the Duke of York. The English were pressing upon New Amsterdam, and the crisis was at hand.

Levy had been but ten years in the colony, but had already become a man of consequence, as appears by the following petition, dated February, 1664. "Read at the meeting, the request presented by the burgomaster, &c., concerning the present condition of the city, and its necessities, to wit; to make the city strong with a stone wall on the land side, and palisades along both river fronts, the money required to do this to be raised among the wealthiest inhabitants; . . . Resolved, to summon the wealthiest inhabitants to ask how much they will loan the city on interest." "Monday, some of the burghers and inhabitants of this city having been sent for, . . . the petition is read, they are asked how much they will give the city on interest . . . at 10 per cent., interest to commence when each shall have paid his last promised pennies."† Asser Levy appeared and lent one hundred florins.‡ He seems to have been the only Jew summoned on this occasion.

But the Dutch regime was doomed. On October 21, 1664, he took the oath of allegiance to the King of England,§ and on a tax-list for 1665, he is assessed two florins a week towards the support of British soldiers.||

Turning again to the court records, the name of Asser Levy, will be found, prominent above all others as a litigant.

* *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, by Charles P. Daly, p. 32.

† *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. V, p. 28, &c. 31. ‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Valentine's Manual*, 1854, p. 524. See also *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. III, p. 76, (Oath of Allegiance to Duke of York.)

|| *Valentine's Manual*, 1861, p. 612. Levy at this time resided on De Hoogh Straat, now part of Pearl Street, East of Broad. See *Valentine's Manual*, 1849.

His name often appears for days in succession, and he evidently would have little use for a lawyer, as almost invariably he appears to have won his case. Only on two or three occasions does he figure as defendant. No other colonial Jew appears to have had so many dealings with Christians, or to have been on more intimate terms with them than he.

Though a litigant is not an amiable character to contemplate, in Levy's case this characteristic certainly had a good effect. It taught his opponents that he was at all times ready to defend his rights. His suits cover a whole range of law, arrests, attachments, accounts, customs, building contracts and apprenticeship.* At times he secures the reprimand of an official for some insult,† or the punishment of a careless court officer.‡ So jealous was he of his rights that no man stood so high in authority that he was afraid to begin suit against him. Thus, we find him suing Nicholas Bayard,§ the relative of Stuyvesant, and the most power-

* For some of these lawsuits, see *Records of New Amsterdam* (Court Minutes), vol. III, pp. 88, 153, 248, 252, 279, 293, 380; vol. IV, pp. 63, 64, 73. In one case, Frans Janzen Van Hooghten had made a contract to build a house for Wessel Evertsen, to be finished by a certain date. Asser Levy had rented the house from Evertsen on the assumption that it would be ready as stipulated. The builder, finding more lucrative work, left Evertsen's house unfinished, and started work on a second building. Levy promptly began suit against the builder, and obtained an order of court directing him to finish the building. Vol. III, p. 293.

Where his rights were involved, Levy was always aggressive, no matter how trifling the occasion. Thus, in one case, a maid servant in his wife's employ left before her time had expired, having been persuaded by the wife of Balthazar Bayart to enter that lady's service. Levy at once began suit against Bayart, and fought the case bitterly to a successful termination. Vol. V, p. 176, also pp. 183, 188. For other cases see *Id.*, vol. IV, pp. 80, 173, 221; vol. V, pp. 114, 132, 137, 158, 168, 222, 316, 324; vol. VI, pp. 66, 79, 98, 162, 171, 185, 271, 278, 302, 351, vol. VII, p. 4.

† *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. VII, p. 7.

‡ *Id.*, vol. V, p. 322.

§ *Id.*, vol. VI, pp. 53, 55.

ful politician in the colony;* also Joannes La Montaigne,† the clerk of the colony. He is also met with as a litigant at Gravesend in 1674.‡

Some of the most prominent men figured as referees in cases in which Levy was interested. Among others, Joannes de Peyster, and Jacob Leysler, the unfortunate leader of the famous uprising known as "Leisler's Rebellion."§ Both of these men seem to have been appointed on Levy's application, a fact which suggests the inference that he was probably well acquainted with them.

In the tax-list of 1674 his property is assessed at 2500 florins.||

In January, 1678, he was granted leave to build a slaughter-house at what is now the east end of Wall street, and "to take Garrett Jansen Rose as a partner."¶ He appears also to have been the owner of a famous tavern in the same locality.**

In further proof of his close relations to his Christian neighbors, it appears that in 1671, when the Lutherans built their first church, the money for this purpose was borrowed from Asser Levy.††

Besides trading at Fort Orange, our burgher must have

* *Valentine's Manual*, 1859.

† *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. V, pp. 315, 320, 322.

‡ *Calendar of New York Historical Manuscripts*, 1664-1776, p. 33.

§ *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. VI, p. 162, &c.

|| *Valentine's Manual*, 1866, p. 805. *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. II, p. 699. The tax-list referred to was made up when the Dutch had recaptured the city and needed money to meet extraordinary expenses. See Grant Wilson's *Memorial History of New York City*, vol. IV, p. 362.

¶ *The Market Book*, by De Voe, p. 55. In 1696 the building was turned into a magazine.

** *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 46, 54, 55. See also Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, p. 33.

†† See paper by Mr. Albion Morris Dyer. *Pub. Amer. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 45, citing Gräbner, *Geschichte der Luth. Kirche*, 1891, vo. I, p. 62.

had extensive dealings elsewhere as well. Thus, during the second Dutch occupation of New York he appears to have received a letter from New England.* His relations with Holland, too, must have been close, for, as early as 1662, he figured in court "as attorney for Abraham Cohn, Jew at Amsterdam, in Europe," and obtained judgment against the defendant for 1620 guilders which had been advanced on bottomry bond and mortgage.†

One would naturally suppose that a person who figured in lawsuits so frequently would become exceedingly unpopular. Strangely enough, quite the contrary seems to have been the case. His honest opposition to imposition and insult, his constant jealousy of his rights, his sterling, honesty and integrity, seem to have gained for him the respect and friendship of his Christian fellows.

The records are proof of this, time and time again. The confidence reposed in his honesty is especially worthy of comment. In 1673, for instance, a suit appears between two Christians, Thomas Williams vs. Edward Smith. A question arose as to the safety of certain goods in defendant's possession. "The court orders that the goods in defendant's house should be delivered under inventory unto Asser Levy's hands until further order."‡

Additional proof is furnished by the fact that he is named as executor in the wills of Christians. As early as 1670 he and Symon J. Romeyn seem to have been appointed administrators of the estate of one Jan H. Steelman.§ They presented their accounts and requested preference for the expenses of administration. This estate seems to have been settled in the following year, for an entry in 1671, in which

* *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. II, p. 684. This seems to have been an offense in those troublesome times. On satisfactory explanation, however, the complaint was dismissed.

† *Id.*, vol. IV, p. 73. Asser Levy vs. Cornelis Pluyvier.

‡ *Id.*, vol. VII, p. 5.

§ *Id.*, vol. VI, p. 272.

preferences are recited, reads "Jacob Kip and Asser Levy for their administration, 500 wampum."*

Again in July, 1672, we find an entry: "Jacob Kip and Asser Levy, curators of the estate of Jan Copal, request the decision of the worthy court regarding the points against Mess. Steenwyck and others."†

In October, 1673, Governor Colve appointed Peter Jacobse Marius and Asser Levy as trustees of the estate of Capt. John Manning, an absconding debtor, in order to wind up his estate.‡ Among other things "they are to gather all the property of John Manning and account to the court." A commission to Levy issued in 1674.§

The influence of Asser Levy seems not by any means to have been confined to New York alone. He appears to have become known and respected in other colonies as well. Thus, the colonial records of Connecticut show that in 1670, one Jacob Lucena had been tried on a criminal charge and fined £20, "to be imprisoned until the fine is paid, and immediately on his discharge to leave the colony."|| The criminal charge referred to was probably Sabbath-breaking, for two days later we find the petition of Jacob Lucena for an abatement of the fine, and the entry continues, "The court see cause, considering he is a Jew, to show him what favor they may, and abate him ten pounds of his fine."¶ Jacob Lucena did not pay the fine, however, but appealed to Asser Levy to use his influence in Connecticut in his behalf. In May, 1671, the following entry appears: "Upon the petition of Mr. Asser Levy this court sees cause to abate

* *Records of New Amsterdam*, vol. VI, p. 354.

† *Id.*, vol. VI, p. 381.

‡ *Documents relating to Colonial History*, edited by Brodhead, vol. II, p. 647.

§ *Calendar of New York Hist. MSS.*, 1664-1776, p. 25.

|| *Colonial Records of Connecticut*, vol. II, p. 144. *Records of the Court of Assistants* (1669-1701), p. 7.

¶ *Colonial Records of Conn.*, vol. II, p. 144, Oct. 13, 1670.

five pounds of Jacob Lucenoe's fine, as a token of their respect to the said Mr. Asser Levy."*

The subject of this sketch died in 1680, leaving a considerable estate for those days. His property was valued at £553, and the inventory discloses many curious articles, among others a Sabbath lamp. His real estate was valued at £218 and the penn at £1800. Letters of administration were granted to his widow, Maria Levy, in April 1682.†

A peculiar fatality seems to attach to the estates of litigants, and Levy's case was no exception. A long and protracted litigation ensued over his estate, a litigation which finally brought one of the claimants to the debtors' prison,‡ much like the legatee mentioned in *Pickwick Papers*.

The detail of this suit has been ably presented in a paper written by Judge Rosendale.§ The principal actor in the litigation appears to have been one Simon Valentine Vander Wilden. Although this name is decidedly Dutch, I have discovered that he too was of the Jewish faith; for, in an old record containing the early revenues of the city of New York, there appears the item: "Simon Valentine Vander Wilden, a Jew, pays for his burgher right."||

In 1684 there appears a marriage certificate "Asser Levy to Margaret Levy, both of New York."¶ This has given rise to speculation that this later date may be an error.

* *Colonial Records of Conn.*, vol. II, p. 154.

† This inventory has been given in full by Mr. George A. Kohut in *The American Hebrew*, May 19, 1893. See also *Record of Wills in Surrogate's office of New York County*, vols. I-II, p. 423, 457.

‡ *Calendar of New York Hist. MSS.*, 1664-1776, p. 119.

§ "An Early Ownership of Real Estate in Albany by a Jewish Trader." *Pub. Am. Jew. Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 68.

|| *Valentine's Manual*, 1858, p. 594. The paper is endorsed: 1682, 16 Jan. Aen. Asser Michielsens. Joode. vor syn Borger Rect. £1, 15 Do. Aen. Valentyn Vander Wilde. Joode. vor syn Borger Recht, 1-4.

¶ *Calendar of New York Hist. MSS.*, 1664-1776, p. 133.

Investigation, however, convinces the writer that there was another Asser Levy, probably the son of the subject of our sketch, who married in 1684. This latter gentleman also turns up repeatedly as a litigant, in the Connecticut records in 1723 and in 1725. In these records he is described as Mr. Asser Levy, of New York.*

A third Asser Levy, in all likelihood a grandson, appears as an officer in the New Jersey line as a patriot soldier of the American Revolution.†

In conclusion it may not be amiss to say that the name of Asser Levy deserves to be preserved if for no other reason, than because of the bold stand which he took against men who wanted to discriminate against his coreligionists and abridge their rights. While he was not a refined or cultured man, but rather a blunt and obstinate character, it must not be forgotten that he was just the kind of man to cope with men equally uncultured, who held sway in his day; and that where a sensitive man might have failed, his persistency gained the victory. It was certainly owing to his struggles that a hostile governor, burgomasters and schepens finally gave up the fight against the civil equality of the Jew in the colony.

* *Colonial Records of Connecticut* (1717-1725,) pp. 423, 488, 576, 577. The family is said to have subsequently removed to Long Island. See Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, p. 33.

† Asher Levy was one of the officers in the 12th New Jersey. See *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army* by F. B. Heitman, p. 262.

SITE OF THE FIRST SYNAGOGUE OF THE CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL OF NEW YORK.

WITH TWO MAPS.

BY ALBION MORRIS DYER.

Knowledge of the sites and situations of the early seats of public worship of the inhabitants of New York, unlike other colonies planted along the Atlantic border of this continent, is uncertain and unsatisfactory. It is well known where the first church edifices of some of the older congregations were located, but there were "churches" before these were built, when the church was too young and its people too poor to indulge in the luxury of public edifices. Perhaps every church society on Manhattan Island can point to a time when its founders assembled for worship in some temporary meeting-place now unknown. Surely is this so of the few bodies that can trace their beginnings back to the seventeenth century. New York is a city of shifting centers. Its people are ever moving their homes, their churches and their institutions. How true this is of the present day everybody knows, but it is also true of its earliest years. It may never be told exactly where on Manhattan Island the original city of the Dutch stood. The site of the West India Company's settlement of New Amsterdam is known. The location of the first fort of Pieter Minuit, the ancient Parade-ground, the Heere Graft, the Bever Graft, the Strand, the Marketvelt, etc., etc., can be determined to-day with reasonable accuracy; but where was the settlement of Adriaen Block? Who can point to the site of these rude huts that sheltered the explorers and traders of 1613? Where was

the trading-post referred to by Champlain under date of 1615? * What spot in the Hudson valley was chosen as the retreat of the hounded Huguenots in these early days of the colony, the spot where the first born white child saw the light of day? † Where stood the first house of the permanent city of New Amsterdam? It may have been on the ground afterward covered by the Fort enclosure. Where did the first settlers bury their dead? Surely not so far inland as the Morris Street plot, known in after years as the "first

* See Quebec Edition, *Works of Champlain*, vol. IV, p. 32. "On the 17th of August [1615], I arrived at Chiaqué, where I was received with great joy and gladness by all the savages of the country. . . . [While there I] received intelligence that a certain nation [Chovontovarias, dwelling between the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers], dwelling three good days journey beyond the Entovhonorous [Onondaguas], on whom the Iroquois also make war, desiring to assist them in this expedition with five hundred good men, also to form an alliance and establish friendship with us, that we might all engage in the war together. Moreover, that they greatly desired to see us and give expression to the pleasure they would have in making our acquaintance.

"I was glad to find this opportunity for gratifying my desire of obtaining knowledge of their country. It was situated only seven days from where the Dutch go to traffic, [*les Flamens dont traicter*] on the 40th degree. The savages there assisted by the Dutch, make war upon them, take them prisoners, and cruelly put them to death, and, indeed, they told us that the preceding year, [1614,] while making war, they captured three of the Dutch, who were assisting their enemies as we do the Alligovataus, and while in action one of their own men was killed. Nevertheless, they did not fail to send back the three Dutch prisoners, without doing them any harm, supposing that they belonged to our party, since they had no knowledge of us except by hearsay, never having seen a Christian. Otherwise, they said, these three prisoners would not have got off so easily, and would not escape again should they surprise and take them."—[Trans. of E. F. Slafter in *Prince Coll.*, 1882, p. 121.]

† The Labadists visitors to New York thus write under date of September 24, 1679. "We conversed with the first male born of Europeans in New Amsterdam named Jean Vigné. His parents were from Valenciennes, and he was about 65 years of age. [Therefore born about 1614.] *Long Island Hist. Soc. Coll.*, vol. I, p. 115.

burying-grounds." Where did they first meet for worship? What rude house in these rough times was sanctified as the first church of Manhattan?

Little wonder that such uncertainty surrounds the beginnings of ecclesiastical life in New York. Massachusetts has her monument marking where the pilgrim's foot first touched the strand. Plymouth knows where the great common house stood in which Elder Brewster gathered his early congregations. The ruins of the old brick church still mark the site of ancient Jamestown, but Manhattan Island has no such monument. Unlike other colonies, New York was never the home of a society of men of one doctrine, never the land of refuge of the hunted and persecuted followers of one faith. New Amsterdam, from its very origin, was a cosmopolitan city, marked from the first as a gathering-place for men of all quarters of the earth. From her birth, New York was destined to be a city of the world; no people, no tongue, no religion ever held Manhattan Island as its own. Its first settlers were not refugees seeking a home for their own particular mode of worship and bent on establishing an exclusive religious community. They came here on industrial errands, to open new outlets for the expanding commercial activities of Holland, to plant new outposts for the encouragement of Dutch industries. Religion was never the business of the people of this island. Shipping and trading gave the city birth; the beaver-skin was her currency, and the windmill her coat-of-arms. Ecclesiastical institutions occupied a secondary place in the public mind, and so it is not strange that the sites and locations of the churches in New York should have been lost.

Still, New York was never without religion. The first comers to the Hudson valley were as devout in their faith and as fervent in their worship as the Puritan or the Episcopalian. It would do violence to the Dutch character of that century to think otherwise. However transitory were the first comers to the shores of the "Silent River of the

Mountains " we may be sure that their orisons ascended regularly and systematically as an indispensable part of the business of the day. This was a century when the zeal of faith burned fiercest in the human heart, and the earliest adventurers to Manhattan brought with them the religious forms and ceremonies with which they were familiar. Simple worship, in rude forms and rough ceremonials, was maintained from the beginning even in the pioneer trading-camps along the river. But the Dutch came to the new country not to worship. They came to trade. They came worshiping, but not to worship. Their purpose being traffic, they opened the doors wide to all the winds that might blow commerce to their shores. The Jew, the Turk, the Christian, all were welcome if on traffic bent. No sentinel stood at the door to inquire into the doctrine or church practices of new comers. No voice was raised against religious liberty on Manhattan Island until commercial agents of the New England governments brought their evil influence to bear upon the regents of the West India Company at Fort Amsterdam and taught these simple Hollanders the ways of persecution. Not until the message of intolerance had crossed the Connecticut valley, the message of scourging and mutilation, of branding and hanging, was the hand of the law laid upon the Lutheran, the Quaker and the Jew in New Netherland. The first settlers worshiped with fervor and with zeal. They kept their worship pure and true to the faith of the fatherland, but they gave the privilege to every man to follow his own conscience in his own way, undisturbed by fears of church or law.

Still another cause worked to the same end, the obliteration of the first sites on Manhattan Island. Uncertainty hung over the early years of the settlement. The adventurers shifted their camps here and there, following the changing demands of trade with the Indians. Sometimes they were on the island, sometimes up the river. Even when at last they had planted a permanent city at the tip of

Manhattan, the life of the new plantation was precarious. The first word of a "church" comes from a time when the settlement was a dozen years old, and that word gives no suggestion of the site. The records that reveal even the second site are of date long after the church has fallen into decay. What were the surroundings of the earliest congregation? Where were the first homes of this first church? Where were the first homes of other churches that followed them during the formative years of the city? These are some of the uncertainties that mark the study of the life of the New York Colony.

During the first years of the colonial life on Manhattan Island the inhabitants met for worship in private houses or some such convenient place. This statement requires no reference to documentary remains for proof. In the absence of all evidence it may still be said with certainty that the commonalty assembled for worship in the private homes of the city. They had worship: however rude the form, it was still divine worship and worthy to be called the beginning of a church-estate, but they had no public place in which to meet for service. Worship was not a function of the government as at Plymouth. The church at New Amsterdam was not an institution in which the government exercised its share of control. True, the first officers of the church were public officers of the colony, but this soon changed and the church was placed on an independent basis, receiving government support only in its finances. Hence, the people were not called together by the voice of the sheriff to gather for worship into the state-house as at Plymouth. The private homes of the city were the only places open for the purposes of worship. Such a meeting place was a fit church for the time being. After a while when the congregation was ready, and when the times warranted, a stated house suitable for the purpose was marked out as the permanent regular "church." It may have been a private house, or a hall, or an edifice built for the purpose. Whatever it was, it was

none the less a church. If the truth were known, there may have been a number of such places, a dozen or a score, where from time to time the practice of the Reformed Religion was conducted at New Amsterdam before the first church edifice was erected. This is the story of every church society on Manhattan Island which can trace its origin to colonial periods; first a handful of friends in a private house, with a neighbor to lead them; then a crowded meeting in an upper chamber; then a stated leader in a hall, then a minister, then a church.

To search out these sites of the first beginnings of churches, to trace back each one of the great religious societies to these early days, to fix the times and circumstances of their origins, and to follow them along from change to change, this is a labor especially difficult and trying with respect to the colony of New York.

The first documentary reference to a church building on Manhattan Island leads back to the time of Pieter Minuit, second Director General of the Province of New Netherland.* This is the oft-quoted notice of the horse-mill built by François, the miller, which was designed to accommodate a large congregation in the second story, and which was to have a tower and bells. This loft over the horse-mill is supposed to have been the first public meeting place for worship of the New Amsterdam colony. But this supposition is purely inferential, there being not a jot of documentary evidence on that point. Supposing that François completed his mill and

*This reference is one quite familiar to the general reader. It appears in the "Description and First Settlement of New Netherland" as found in Wassenaer's *History of Europe*, Amsterdam, 1621-1632, and translated and printed in the *Documentary History of New York*, vol. III, pp. 27 to 48; "François Molemacher is busy building a horse-mill, over which shall be constructed a spacious room sufficient to accommodate a large congregation, and then a tower is to be erected where the bells brought from Porto Rico will be hung." p. 42.

prepared the loft as planned, naturally this spacious hall would have been preferred as a place of worship to the private homes where the congregation had been in the habit of meeting. Thus was it done at Haarlaem in the town hall built by the settlers at the north end of Manhattan Island. When the minister came two years after to organize the congregation into a church of the Reformed order, he may have found them still worshipping over the horse-mill. This also is inferential. The records are silent as to where Michaelius gathered his little flock for the enrollment. Presuming that the loft above the horse-mill had been in such service for two years, it is proper to say that the church was instituted there. Information about the installation of the church comes from the celebrated Michaelius letter* which describes at length the organization of the church, but says nothing as to the place of meeting. Besides these two documents, there is nothing bearing on the church at Manhattan until the coming of Wouter Van Twiller. Under his administration the congregation was housed in a wooden building, fitted solely for church purposes. This building, known in after years as the Oude Kerke stood on the Strand southeast of the fort, opposite the public landing place on the shore of the East river. We can point to the very spot where this, the first church in the province, stood,† but the city was then well along in years, and the church was enjoying the ministrations of its second regularly installed pastor. The building stood long enough after its abandonment by the congregation, when that body moved into the beautiful stone chapel in the Fort, to win notoriety in

* The Michaelius letter is printed in translation, together with an account of the finding thereof, in a volume bearing that title. It is more accessible in Corwin's *Manual of the Reformed Church in America*, 3d edition, where it appears in full. The letter itself is in the MSS Exhibition room of the Lenox Library, New York.

† No. 33 Pearl Street, New York.

the city as a landmark useful in the drawing of deeds and mortgages.*

But prior to the time of the old wooden church on The Strand all is uncertainty. The records are absolutely devoid of reference to the horse-mill. Deeds and mortgages of the Dutch period contain no mention of such a building. Not

* The exact site of the Oude Kerke may be found in the present block bounded by Broad Street, Whitehall Street, Bridge Street and Pearl Street. A narrow alley runs south from Bridge Street, a little east of Whitehall Street, into the center of the block. The church of 1633 stood east of the terminus of this alley, midway between Bridge and Pearl Streets, and about fifty feet east of Whitehall Street. Here is the documentary evidence of its situation :

Translation from vol. VI, p. 351 of the Dutch Records. (*New York Col. MSS. Trans.*, II, 330), 4th April, 1656, In Council.

Resolved to sell on Saturday, the 8th day of April, to the highest bidder, the house, lot, &c., called the old church, formerly inhabited by Capt. Nuton, situated on the East river, next the alley which is between the house of Attorney General Tienhoven and this building and opposite the house of Mr. Hendrick Kip.

The purchaser of this plot was Mr. Allard Antony. (*New York Hist. Soc. Coll.*, II, 1849, p. 103.) When the water front along the East river was extended, the Strand became Pearl Street. The water lots along the south side of the street were taken up by owners of lots opposite and from the records thereof the lot purchased by Antony can be traced. The way leading down from the Strand to the dock is still preserved in Moore Street. The alley referred to in the description of the church lot is the alley mentioned above as running south from Bridge Street toward Pearl. To find the exact lot where stood the Oude Kerke, extend the east line of Moore Street across Pearl. Measure eastward from this line along the north line of Pearl Street, 47.8 feet to a point at the southwest corner of the lot. The lot was 24.9 feet front on the Strand and it extended through to Bridge Street. References to this church as being on Broad Street arose from the circumstance that Broad Street forms one of the boundaries of the block. The building stood far from Broad Street and there were many lots between this street and the church. All lots on this block run parallel to Whitehall and Broad Street and front on Pearl and Bridge Streets. [The writer wishes to acknowledge the assistance given by Mr. W. S. Pellettreau of New York, in determining this location and these measurements.]

until after the city passed under English rule does the word "horse-mill" appear in such documents. The horse-mill then mentioned may have been the horse-mill of François, the miller. It is pure speculation to say it was the same. But it is a speculation based on the probability that the horse-mill mentioned in 1667 had been in existence some time before that year, and on the improbability that there would have been two such primitive methods of grinding grain in New Amsterdam, blessed as that city was by no less than three windmills.* It should be understood clearly that there is nothing but an inferential connection between the two. Gratifying as it would be to identify the very spot where this first congregation of New Netherlands gathered for organization into a church-estate, it must be borne in mind, in the interest of historical accuracy, that the spot has not been found; the site is still unknown.

The absence of references to the horse-mill in the deeds and mortgages of the early years following its erection is indicative of its probable location on the waste lands lying northeast of the city. At a later period the cheaper lands of the city were situated along the line of Broadway in the vicinity of the King's Farm, but before the coming of the English the lands bordering the great tidal ditch that coursed up the present Broad Street and extending northward in the direction of William and Wall Streets formed the cheap section of the city. The property there was unassigned to individual holders at this time. The desirable garden plots were much nearer the sheltering Fort. The land bordering the ditch was public land at the time the horse-mill was built and for many years after. If, therefore, the mill was built on this public land northeast of the city we should not expect to find it mentioned in the early deeds and mortgages. It might remain on this waste land for many years without

* Windmills were erected in several places in New Amsterdam during the administration of Gov. Kieft.

coming into the records as a landmark, for the simple reason that there were no early conveyances of property in this section. If it had stood nearer the Fort it would have entered into the description of parcels of land as they were passed from owner to owner. The recorded conveyances of lots along the early streets of the city have been carefully scrutinized again and again for some mention of a horse-mill, but none is found. Conveyancers in the early days were quick to seize upon some such mark to aid them in their description and it is difficult to see how a horse-mill, with a tower and bells and a public hall in the second story could have escaped their attention. Failing to find reference to the mill in the early deeds is good ground for the conclusion that the building was not situated west of Broad Street and that its proper site would be found east of that thoroughfare.

The waste land east of the tidal ditch was a suitable place for the horse-mill, even at that early day. Stone Street and Beaver Street, as they now stand, opened upon the ditch from the direction of the Fort and Parade-ground. The Strand swept around the river-front from the point of the Island and led to the open country in the neighborhood of the present Hanover Square. The tidal ditch running up Broad Street gave entrance to barks and yachts, and a roadway along the present line of William Street led up to the Bowery road. A grist-mill built here between this roadway and the ditch would be situated most conveniently for all interested in the grinding of grist, consumers, producers, shippers, merchants, farmers and teamsters. No more fitting place for such an industry could be found than the public commons in that section of New Amsterdam.

The horse-mill mentioned in the deed of 1667 stood in that situation. It was between two streets which were cut through the marsh land east of the broad ditch when that part of the island was opened for city uses. Beaver Street was extended under the name of Princess Street, to the William Street roadway, and Stone Street was also extended

across the ditch to join this same roadway. The two new streets came together at the roadway, forming a somewhat triangular shaped plot, the western side of which was the tidal ditch. This plot of land was portioned out to the burghers by the Dutch rulers of the province.* No provision for a street through this triangular plot was made under the Dutch government. Yet the horse-mill stood in the center of the triangle well back from the Broad Street front. Its description in the deed referred to gives it frontage on "Mill Street, formerly Sleyck Strege," but this street had no place in the original plan of grants of the waste land east of Broad Street. The horse-mill was located before the streets were fixed, and when the grants were made the two new streets were so situated as to permit the owners of the lots on either street to make use of their property without being inconvenienced by the horse-mill that stood in the rear.†

But an entrance was necessary for horses and wagons passing in and out to the mill. This was gained at first by passing through private property. We can not look back upon that day and see all that occurred at this spot when the street was opened, but we can trace with accuracy the history of the wagon-track, after a time, in the deeds and transfers, and finally in the maps and surveys of the island. Only its first beginnings are unknown. It may have been a bridle-path at first, then a wagon-track, then a lane. It is well marked in the records during the final years of Dutch control under the name Sleyck Strege. This name, signifying Muddy Lane in the Dutch language, betrays its origin. It had no other use than to give access to the horse-mill mentioned in the deed. That was its use in 1667. But Muddy Lane had earned its name many years before that date. What was its use in the beginning?

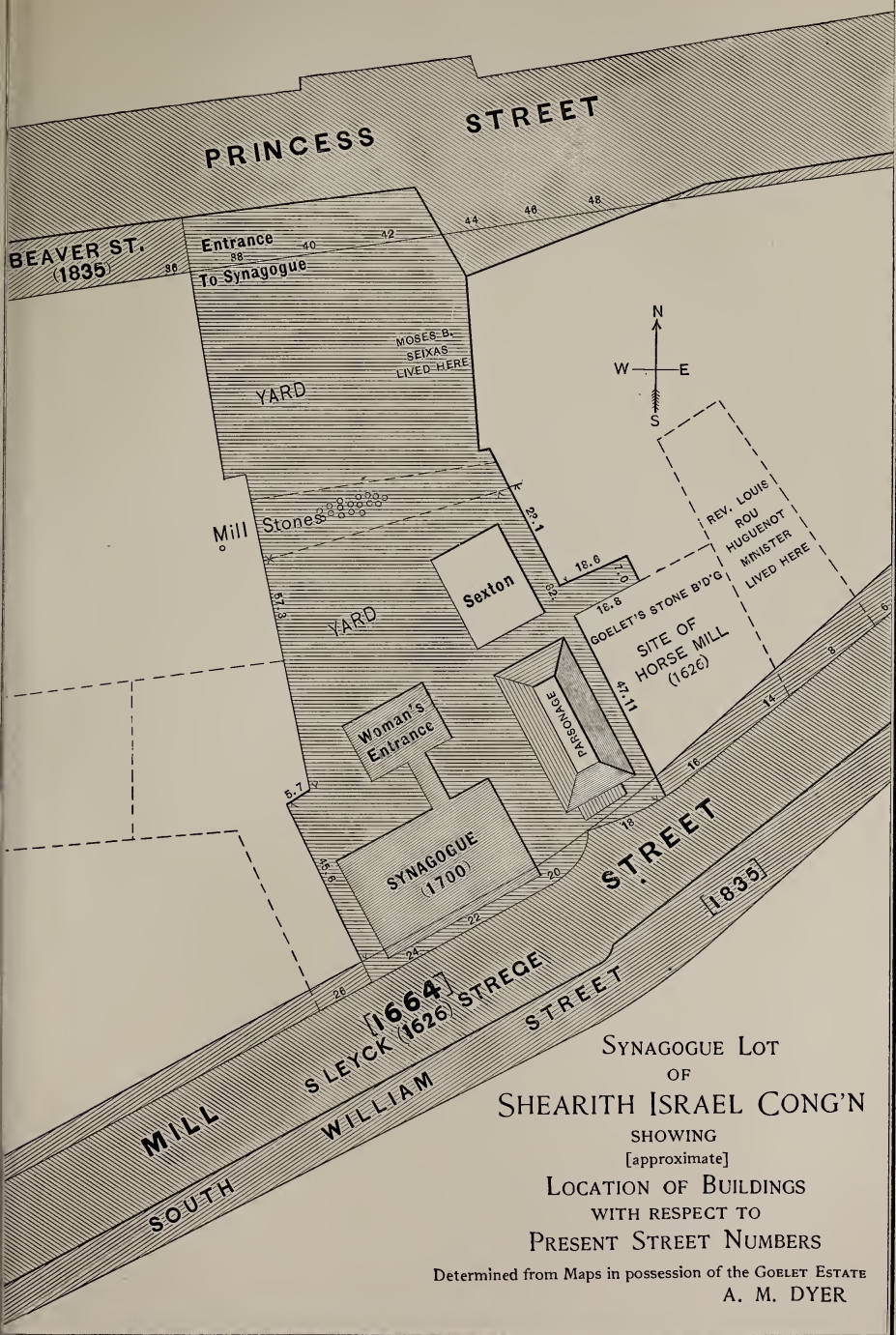
*See constructed map of this apportionment with lot lines and names of grantees in *Valentine's Manual*, 1857.

†See my article in *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 50.

Could it have had a different use when as a rough wagon-road over the soddy ground it earned for itself the suggestive name of Sleyck Strege? What stood in the center of that block between Beaver, Broad and Stone Streets when Muddy Lane was opened as a mere wagon-track, if not the horse-mill of 1626? Sleyck Strege had no outlet at first; it was a blind alley leading to the mill, and customers went back again by the same route to the tide ditch. Ere long it passed out of its first condition and won the distinction of a street. It ceased to be a wagon-track and became a well-beaten road and the name Sleyck Strege clung to it still when it was no longer suitable. The English gave it a new name, but the street held to the uses for which it was first opened. It gave access only to the grist-mill, and an outlet was made to relieve the pressure at the mill and wagons passed this way into Stone Street. Still it remained a narrow and tortuous alley leading up the center of the block. So it was for two centuries. It was never in all its history a thoroughfare until widened and extended. After the great fire of 1835 it lost its identity and character in the modern South William Street. Even while the great Jewish congregation held its seat of worship on this narrow lane, during a hundred and fifty years, Mill Street was not used as the passageway to the synagogue. Mill Street passed along the rear of the synagogue and the congregation went in and out through the Beaver Street gate. Clearly Sleyck Strege was opened to gain entrance to the grist-mill, long before the date of the first mention of the grist-mill in the public records.

Even if the inference that the two mills are identical is incorrect, the spot is one of genuine importance to the antiquarian. Here the great congregation of Shearith Israel planted its first synagogue. A suggestion worthy of passing notice has been made that "The Jews adopted this original horse-mill loft for their own religious uses."* It was during

* *Christian Intelligencer*, October 18, 1893, p. 5.



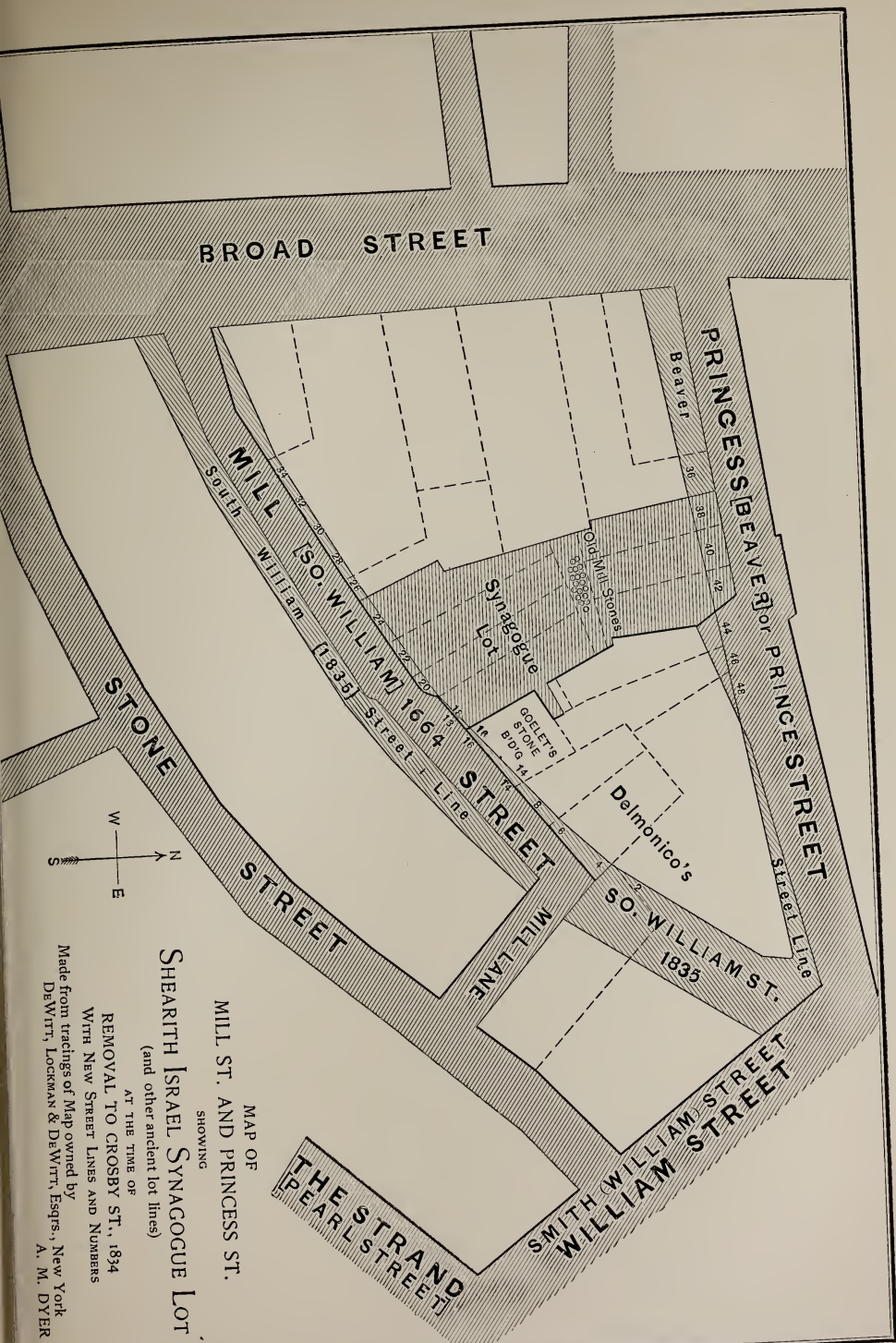
a search of this part of the city in connection with the study of the documents, that the attention of the writer was directed to a number of millstones hidden away under the surface of the court-yard behind the walls of the warehouses on the block bounded by Beaver, Broad and South William Streets.* They had been there so long that no one of the tenants knew anything of their history. The stones were sixteen in number. Some of them were dug up and examined. Each was about two and a half feet in diameter, made of three pieces, and firmly bound by bands of iron, covered with rust. The surfaces were worn smooth, indicative of long service in the grinding of grain. They bore other signs of antiquity, and an expert importer of millstones was invited to examine them. He pronounced them to be stones of great antiquity, and of a kind taken from the Belgian quarries. Such stones had not been imported into the country for nearly two centuries. Further investigation showed that the stones had been found piled up in the rear of the warehouses after the fire of 1835, and were utilized by the tenants who wished to make use of the court-yard for business purposes. Tradition traces them back beyond this time. They stood behind the old synagogue, where they were piled when abandoned. There they had remained forgotten and useless, save for the children who played about them in the synagogue yard. No doubt they had served the purpose for which they were made in the old horse-mill, and were thrown aside when no longer useful after the mill had fallen into decay. Perhaps they came over the ocean from Holland with the first governor of the province, as part of the outfit sent by the new-formed Dutch West India Company to lift the Manhattan settlement out of its precarious condition as a trading-post, and establish it on the firm basis of an agricultural colony. Perhaps they were the very

*See my article in *The Outlook*, April 21, 1894, and reprinted in the *Collegiate Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of the City of New York Year Book*, No. 16, p. 135.

stones employed by François in the horse-mill which he was erecting when Pieter Minuit came with reinforcements to the struggling colony. With these stones the first meal was prepared by machinery for white men in the new country. They mark the beginning of the first of the great industries that have helped to make Manhattan Island the seat of the world's great metropolis. More than this, they fix the spot where the old grist-mill stood, and they seem to strengthen the conclusion as to the location of the first church of New Amsterdam. They seem to indicate that this site, if it is to be identified, will be found to have been situated on the marshy land between the tidal ditch (Broad Street) and the head of the roadway (William Street) leading to the farms on the northern part of the Island.

On this classic spot, the first Jewish synagogue of America was planted long before the close of the seventeenth century. It was a synagogue well worthy the name in that primitive time, although it is not to be compared with the superb edifice in which the same congregation assembles to-day for worship. It was a house hired for the purpose and set apart for exclusive use as a synagogue. This building stood on the northwest side of Mill Street, near the site of the second synagogue built in 1729, and it stood there before the year 1700.* But as with all the religious bodies started in that century, there were pro-synagogues of earlier times, before the congregation was ready for the venture of an exclusive building reserved for the sole purpose of worship. These pro-synagogues were the private houses of the readers or other members of the congregation, and they run back to the earliest days of the colonies, possibly even to a time before the English possession, and before intolerance had laid its hand upon the province. Jews were here in numbers nearly a decade before the capitulation. They were so numerous as to require thinning out after the New Amster-

**Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 51.



dam church and state had learned the uses of persecution. It is doing no violence to truth to say that a colony of Jews so numerous as was that in New Amsterdam before 1664 had religious services among themselves. The failure of the effort of 1655 to secure the banishment of a part of the Jewish colony must have encouraged the citizens of that faith and given them confidence in the permanency of their adopted homes. We know of a truth that the congregation existed in an orderly manner in the year 1682.* We have the best of evidence that Jewish worship was established in New York in that year. We know also that a few years after 1685, the Jews petitioned for liberty to exercise their religion in the province. The mayor and aldermen, true to the charter of liberties, then decreed in answer to the petition that "no public worship is tolerated by act of assembly but to those that profess faith in Christ, and therefore the Jews' worship is not to be allowed." But it was allowed. This edict was never enforced, and the Jews quietly continued the practice mentioned by Domine Selyns of meeting separately for worship after the public service in the King's Chapel. How can we pass from the years of the first coming of the Jews in goodly numbers before the surrender of the city to the English, and the recorded gathering of 1682? Was the voice of prayer silent in the Jewish colony during these twenty-five years? Shall we say there was no Jewish worship in New York prior to the service mentioned by Selyns? Was the colony too small to meet for worship in 1656, when part of the Jews were recommended for banishment, and when the Dutch minister feared that they were about to build a synagogue? In this respect the Jews of Manhattan were no different from other citizens; they gathered among themselves according to their opportunities, and, as the congregation required it, in their own homes, in an upper chamber, in a hired hall or in a public edifice, and

**Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, p. 41.

they began to gather in this way for worship at the very first, as soon as there were enough of one mind to form a meeting.

But where were these Jewish homes that were made to serve in these early days the purposes of a pro-synagogue? Where was the gathering place of worship of the little colony of Jewish merchants who came here to trade in the summer of 1654? Where were the meeting places of the Jews referred to by Domine Selyns? Where was the seat of worship before the Jews occupied the synagogue in Mill Street? Here the same uncertainty confronts us. We can not find these spots on the city map. We have the same difficulty here as when we attempt to find the first meeting-places of the Dutch Calvinists or of the Dutch Lutherans or of the English Quakers. But this lack of knowledge weakens not in the least degree the conviction that there were such places of initial worship for the Jew as well as for the Christian.

The writer herewith presents a map of the location of the synagogue of Shearith Israel as determined a few years ago and described in a paper read before this Society in December, 1894. It gives the dimensions and shape of the plot as it stood when the congregation abandoned the synagogue and moved up town to Crosby Street. It gives the old lines of the block as they appeared at the time of the removal with the lot lines and landmarks as they are still noted in conveyances of property in that vicinity. The old streets are shown as they were before the widening and extending which followed the great fire of 1835. From these lines the exact location of the synagogue plot may be found. The map also shows the lot where the horse-mill stood, and the place where the millstones were found.

Another map is shown, also giving the synagogue lot enlarged. Here is given the probable location of the buildings on the plot as described at length in the paper referred

to.* These maps were constructed by the writer from tracings and drawings of several different maps and surveys studied in a searching of the documents and records of that period. One of these is a map and abstract of the Goelet property in possession of the Goelet estate. Another is the map and abstract of this block in the office of De Witt, Lockman & De Witt, Attorneys at Law, New York. The public surveys of the City of New York, made after the fire of 1835, were also consulted. Other maps and surveys were examined not the least important being the periodical insurance surveys of Messrs. Perris and Brown, which were generously opened to the writer by the present representatives of that institution.

* *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, pp. 51, 52, 53. Based upon traditions still living in the congregation.

THE JEWISH PIONEERS OF THE OHIO VALLEY.

BY DAVID PHILIPSON, D. D., *Cincinnati, O.*

In a small volume entitled *Cincinnati in 1826*, written by Drake and Mansfield and published in the year 1827, the following brief notice occurs: "The Jewish congregation was established in 1822. A frame building west of Main St. and between Third and Fourth is at present used by the society as a synagogue." This contemporary allusion is the first printed reference I have been able to find concerning the Jews of the Ohio Valley. The Jewish beginnings in the eastern and southern portions of our country appear quite venerable when contrasted with the comparatively recent settlement in the section west of the Alleghanies. In my search among the volumes detailing the story of the efforts and struggles of the pioneer white men among the pathless forests of the great northwest territory I have come across but one name that has a Jewish sound, that of a colonel serving in the forces under the command of Gen. St. Clair, Nathaniel G. S. Hart.* But this Hart was a brother of Mrs. Henry Clay; hence he was, in all likelihood, not a Jew.

The first settlement of whites in Ohio was at Marietta in 1788; Losantiville, as the earliest settlement on the Ohio river, the present Cincinnati, was first called, was founded two years later in 1790. If there were any Jews among the population during the first twenty-five years, all trace of them has been lost except in one instance, brought to light by a curious circumstance. In the year 1821, when there were but six confessing Jews living in Cincinnati, as shall be

* Atwater, *History of Ohio*, p. 210.

recounted shortly, a dying man, by the name of Benjamin Leib or Lape, requested that some Jews be called to his bedside. In answer to the summons, two of the young men hastened to his house. He informed them that he had been born a Jew but had married out of the faith; he had not lived as a Jew nor been known as one, but his dying request was to be buried with Jewish rites in a Jewish cemetery. His wish was fulfilled. His descendants are still living in Cincinnati, but have never been identified with Judaism or the Jews. There may have been other instances like this in the recently founded town, of Jews by birth who were not known nor recognized as such, but we possess no knowledge nor record of them.

The Jewish pioneer of the Ohio Valley was Joseph Jonas, a young man of English birth and of strong Jewish sympathies. He was born in Exeter, England, in 1792, and emigrated to this country, arriving at New York in October, 1816. Fortunately, we have from his own pen an account reciting the story of his arrival in this country and his journey westward.* In this brief memoir he writes that he left his English home with the avowed purpose of settling in Cincinnati, having read much of the beauties of the Ohio Valley and the splendid opportunities which the new country afforded. Friends in the east endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose of going to a spot so far removed from civilization, one of the arguments used being "in the wilds of America and entirely amongst Gentiles you will forget your religion and your God." The young man, however, who was of a superior nature, could not be moved from his purpose; he assured his friends that he would not renounce his religion nor forsake his God. He started on the long and tedious journey westward, possessing little more than faith and courage. He left Philadelphia on the second day of January, 1817, and arrived in Cincinnati on the eighth of

* *Occident*, vol. I, p. 547, and vol. II, pp. 29, 143, 244.

March. He was a watchmaker by trade and had little difficulty in establishing himself. He found none other of his faith, but though thus isolated he remained mindful of his promise to his friends, his constant prayer being, to use his own words, "that he might be a nucleus around which the first congregation might be formed to worship the God of Israel in the great western territory."* In reply to a request for incidents in the life of this pioneer, addressed to his daughter, Mrs. Annie J. Moses, now living in New York City, I have received quite a lengthy communication containing a number of interesting facts not heretofore published. Referring to the arrival of her father in the metropolis of the Ohio Valley, Mrs. Moses writes, "he was known and respected as an Israelite from the first day he entered the town, made many warm friends among other denominations and was upon the most intimate terms with them throughout his life. He was quite a curiosity at first, being the first Jew seen by many; their ideas being rather peculiar concerning them. They came from various parts of the country to see him, and one old Quakeress said, 'art thou a Jew? Thou art one of God's chosen people. Wilt thou let me examine thee?' She turned him round and round and at last exclaimed, 'well, thou art no different to other people.'" In the memoir referred to, the pioneer mentions this same fact of numbers of people coming from the country round about to see him. In the first directory ever published in Cincinnati, in the year 1819, the name of Joseph Jonas is the only Jewish name noted; he is designated as a silversmith by occupation; in the same directory, he is mentioned as Officer of the First Vail in the list of officers of the Cincinnati Royal Arch Chapter of Masons.

In this year, however, he was joined by three other members of the Jewish faith. Lewis Cohen of London, Barnet Levi of Liverpool, and Jonas Levy of Exeter, arrived in

* *Occident*, vol. I, p. 548.

Cincinnati in June, 1819. In 1820, their number was increased by the arrival of David Israel Johnson, who came from Connersville in the present state of Indiana. Some years prior, a roving character, by the name of Phineas Israel, had left his home in Portsmouth, England, to seek his fortune. He penetrated westward to the frontier stations Brookville and Connersville. These were the outlying posts of civilization at the time. Hither came the Indians to exchange furs for ornaments and other articles. Phineas Israel was dubbed Johnson in the settlement, and he retained that name. He wrote such glowing accounts to his relatives in England of the opportunities which the new country afforded, that his brother David determined to join him. The latter left Plymouth with his wife and infant child, and on his way to his brother passed through Cincinnati. Joseph Jonas tried to induce him to settle there, but proof against persuasion he adhered to his purpose of casting his lot with his brother. He arrived at the frontier station in 1818; his brother being known by the name of Johnson, he assumed that same name, writing himself thereafter David Israel Johnson in place of David Israel. The hardships of frontier life proved too severe for him, and after two years he removed to Cincinnati, arriving there in 1820. The first Jewish child born in the western country was a son of this David Israel Johnson and his wife Eliza; the child first saw the light of day in Connersville; the first Jewish child born in Cincinnati was likewise a son of this couple, Frederick A. Johnson, born June 2, 1821; he died on January 20, 1893, having lived in Cincinnati all his life; he was universally and familiarly known as 'Squire Johnson. The first Jewess born west of the Allegheny mountains is still living in Cincinnati, a cultured gentlewoman of the old school; this is Mrs. Selena Abrahams, a daughter of David I. and Eliza Johnson. She was born on the thirteenth day of September, 1823. This living link with the Jewish pioneers brings the beginnings of Jewish life in this section very near to us.

During the first two years of his residence in his new home, the pioneer, Joseph Jonas, being the only Jew in the town, could give no public evidence of his faith other than that involved in the knowledge of his fellow-citizens that he was such; he grasped the first opportunity to hold a religious service; as stated above, three more Jews had arrived in 1819; in company with them and David I. Johnson, who came from Brookville for the purpose, Joseph Jonas held the first Jewish religious service in the western country on the great holidays in the fall of 1819. This departure from the traditional custom that required the presence of ten males at the service seems strange, but the statement, being given by the pioneer himself, is undoubtedly correct. It can be explained only by the great desire and zeal which must have possessed them to participate in such a service.

The number of Jewish settlers was increased during the closing months of this year, 1819, by the arrival of several newcomers, Abraham Jonas, a brother of the pioneer, Morris Moses with his wife Sarah, a sister of Jonas, and Philip Symonds with his wife and child. The following year witnessed the coming of Solomon Buckingham, Moses Nathan and Solomon Menken. In 1821, we note the arrival of Solomon Moses; in 1822, that of his brother Phineas, who outlived all the pioneers by many years; he died on June 23, 1895, at the advanced age of ninety-seven years; in that same year, 1822, there came also Samuel Jonas, another brother of the first comer, a fourth of the Moses brothers, Simeon; Morris and Joseph Symonds arrived in 1823. A careful examination of the city directory of 1825, the second issued, disclosed these further Jewish names, Joseph Alexander, mentioned as coming from Maryland, Samuel J. De Young, Samuel Joseph and Eliezer Symonds, all English.

It will be noted that with the exception of Solomon Menken, Moses Nathan and Solomon Buckingham, all of these

early settlers were of English birth ; in fact, this continued to be the case till the year 1830, when a wave of German immigration flowed into Cincinnati. The writer once asked the pioneer Phineas Moses, whom he had the pleasure of knowing for a number of years before his demise, whether there was any special reason for the fact that so many English Jews chose Cincinnati as their place of residence. He assured his questioner that there was no further cause than a personal one; one friend attracted another. The pioneers with the exception of David I. Johnson, Morris Moses and Morris Symonds appear to have been, all of them, unmarried men at the time of their arrival. It may be of interest to mention here that some years after they had established themselves in Cincinnati, the two brothers, Joseph and Abraham Jonas, married in New York, the daughters of Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas, who had played such a prominent rôle in Jewish life in Philadelphia and New York ; the sisters died in Cincinnati after a brief married life ; Lucia Orah, the wife of Abraham Jonas, departed this life on the first of Tammuz, 5585 (June 17, 1825), aged twenty years, and Rachel, the wife of Joseph Jonas, on the 22 of Shebat, 5587 (February 19, 1827), aged twenty-six years.

The personal statement of the pioneer regarding the new community is of value. In the sketch already referred to he writes : "From the period of the arrival of the first Israelite in Cincinnati to this date (viz. 1842) the Israelites have been much esteemed and highly respected by their fellow-citizens, and a general interchange of civilities and friendships has taken place between them. Many persons of the Nazarene faith, residing from fifty to one hundred miles from the city, hearing that there were Jews living in Cincinnati, came into town for the special purpose of viewing and conversing with some of the children of Israel, 'the holy people of God,' as they termed us. From the experience which we have derived by being the first settlers . . .

of our religion in a new country, we arrive at the conclusion that the Almighty will give His people favor in the eyes of all nations if they will only conduct themselves as good citizens in a moral and religious point of view ; for it is already conceded to us by our neighbors that we have the fewest drunkards, vagrants, or individuals amenable to the laws of any community, according to our numbers, in this city or district of country ; and we also appreciate the respect and esteem those individuals are held in who duly conform to the principles of our religion, especially by a strict conformity to our holy Sabbaths and festivals.”*

As soon as a sufficient number of Jews was settled in the town, active steps were taken towards forming a congregation ; services had been held every year regularly on New Year’s Day and the Day of Atonement after the initial service of the year 1819. This continued till 1823. The time had now arrived when the formation of a congregation appeared possible, since the Jewish inhabitants numbered about twenty. In the note quoted from Drake and Mansfield’s book at the beginning of this paper the statement is made that the congregation was formed in 1822. This is not quite correct. That statement may refer to the services which were held on the holidays. The records show that the congregation was organized in the opening days of the year 1824. The preliminary meeting for the purpose was called for the fourth of January, 1824, at the residence of Morris Moses. There were in attendance Joseph Jonas, Morris Moses, David I. Johnson, Jonas Levy, Solomon Moses, Simeon Moses, Phineas Moses, Samuel Jonas, Solomon Buckingham, and Morris Symonds. These were then really the charter members of the B’ne Israel congregation, the oldest Jewish congregation in the central-west of the country. The purpose for which the meeting was convened was fully discussed, and the following unanimously adopted as the sense of those who had assembled :

* *Occident*, vol. II, p. 29.

"WHEREAS, it is the duty of every member of the Jewish persuasion, when separated from a congregation, to conform as near as possible to the worship and ceremonies of our holy religion, and as soon as a sufficient number can be assembled, to form ourselves into a congregation for the purpose of glorifying our God and observing the fundamental principles of our faith as developed in the Laws of Moses; with these impressions the undersigned persons convened at the residence of Morris Moses, in the city of Cincinnati, on the fourth day of January, 1824, corresponding to the fourth of Shebat, 5584."

This was signed by every one present. The chairman of the meeting was empowered to invite every member of the Jewish community to be present at the next meeting, at which the organization of the congregation was to be effected. This second meeting was called two weeks later at the same place, and there, on the eighteenth day of January, 1824, the congregation was organized. The minute of the meeting reads: "In accordance with a resolution of a convention which met at the residence of Morris Moses, in the city of Cincinnati, State of Ohio, on the fourth of January, 1824, corresponding with the fourth of Shebat, 5584, a full convention of every male of the Jewish persuasion was convened at the house of the aforesaid Morris Moses on the eighteenth of January, 1824, corresponding with the eighteenth day of Shebat, 5584." A constitution and by-laws were framed and adopted at this meeting. Joseph Jonas was elected Parnas; Jonas Levy and Phineas Moses, Gabayim.

The congregation had no home of its own for twelve years; the members met for worship in rented quarters. The first place of worship was in a frame building west of Main street, and between Third and Fourth. In 1828, the congregation worshipped on Front street, between Main and Sycamore, and in 1830, on Fourth street, between Sycamore and Broadway. Members of the congregation conducted the services, notably Joseph Jonas, David I. Johnson and Morris Moses.

For five years the congregation continued to run on the basis whereon it had been organized, but in the year 1829, the community having increased considerably, inasmuch as there were dwelling in the city thirty-two male and twenty female adults, a committee was appointed to incorporate the congregation under the laws of the State. On the eighth of January, 1830, the General Assembly of Ohio passed the desired act of incorporation. The document consists of eight sections, the first being the charter proper, the remaining seven dealing with specific regulations to govern the congregation. The first article reads as follows :

“Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, That Morris Symonds, Joseph Jonas, Morris Moses, David I. Johnson, Solomon Moses, Joseph Symonds, Phineas Moses, Henry Hart, Abraham Jonas, Samuel Jonas, Samuel Jacob De Young, Henry Hyman, Simon Block, David Lewis, Simon Symonds, Bernard Le Jeune, Lewis Levine and Benjamin Silvers, and all other Israelites residing either temporarily or permanently in the city of Cincinnati, who may apply and be accepted into this society, and their successors, are hereby constituted a body corporate and politic under the name and style of ‘Kal a Kodish Beneh Israel’ (Holy Congregation of the Children of Israel), according to the form and mode of worship of the Polish and German Jews of Cincinnati, and, under this title and denomination, shall enjoy the right of perpetual succession, and shall be capable in law of owning, purchasing, receiving, accepting and holding, possessing and enjoying for themselves and their successors, all immovables and effects whatsoever, not exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars, by means of any act, contract, deed, purchase or transaction whatever ; to receive all donations or cessions, whether inter vivos or mortis causa ; to accept or reject any legacy or successions, to sue or be sued, summon or be summoned, plead or be*

* This is a corrupt transliteration of the Hebrew and should read Kahal ha-Kadosh B’ne Yisrael.

impleaded, answer or be answered to in all suits or actions, and to enact and put in execution by-laws, resolutions and regulations for the better government of the society, and not contrary to the laws of the State or the United States, and may also have and use a common seal, and the same to break, alter or renew at pleasure."

The earnest desire of the members had been for some time to have a permanent home. As early as 1826 a committee had been named to canvass for subscriptions for the building of a synagogue. The community being so small and therefore unable to furnish the funds necessary for the purpose, the committee appealed for subscriptions to the Jews throughout the country and even beyond the seas. Their co-religionists in Charleston, S. C., and Philadelphia responded liberally to the appeal; one gift of fifty dollars was received from Barbados, W. I., and a generous contribution was sent from Portsmouth, England, the native place of a number of Cincinnatians. Progress was slow, however, and in 1829 a new committee was named, consisting of Morris Moses and David I. Johnson, with especial instructions to place themselves in communication with the prosperous Jewish community of New Orleans. The labors of the new committee were so successful that in July, 1829, the congregation was able to buy a plot of ground on Broadway, between Fifth and Sixth streets. Matters rested now until 1834, when the congregation having increased in membership, owing to the influx of new comers, it was felt by the leading spirits of the community that they could proceed with the building of the synagogue. A committee, composed of Joseph Jonas and Phineas Moses, was appointed with full power to raise funds and build the synagogue. So well did the committee perform its task that within a year the corner-stone of the synagogue was laid (June 11, 1835). The service was conducted by the first reader the congregation had ever engaged, the Reverend Joseph Samuels. The erection of the building was now proceeded with and on the ninth of September, 1836, the

first synagogue in the great northwest territory was dedicated solemnly and joyously. The reader was a Reverend Henry Harris. The address was delivered by Joseph Jonas; unfortunately this address together with all his other papers was consumed by the fire which visited his daughter's home in Sheffield, Alabama, after her father's demise. However, in the memoir already referred to, he describes his emotion upon this occasion that witnessed the consummation of his fondest and proudest hopes. He wrote in 1842, six years after the event, "what must have been the exciting feelings of the founder of this congregation at the consecration of this first temple west of the Allegheny mountains when, in knocking thrice outside the inner door, he was addressed by the reader within: 'It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh,' and he answered, 'Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them and I will praise the Lord!'"* Now, that we have seen the congregation housed in its own home, we may consider the pioneer history of the community closed.

There are, however, a number of other matters which must be set forth in order to make the account as complete as the scanty material that has survived permits. The life of the early Jewish settlers in the Ohio Valley flowed peaceably along; there are no stories of exceptional deeds to tell. Births, marriages, deaths, and the daily toils, cares and occupations of human life compose the tale. I have already noted the first births in the community. The first marriage ceremony was performed on September 15, 1824, Morris Symonds and Rebekah Hyams being the high contracting parties; the next marriages recorded are those of Simeon Moses and Jane Joseph on Nov. 21, 1827, Phineas Moses and Elinor Block on May 4, 1829, and Abraham Jonas and Louisa Block on Oct. 11, 1829. A son of the last-named couple, Benjamin Franklin Jonas, served as United States Senator from Louisiana from March 4, 1879,

* *Occident*, vol. II, p. 146.

to March 4, 1885. The first death in the community has been already mentioned, Benjamin Leib or Lape who requested to be buried as a Jew. At the time of his death in 1821, there was no Jewish burying ground in the city. In order to fulfil the dying man's request, steps were at once taken towards procuring a piece of land for burial purposes. A small plot of ground was bought from Nicholas Longworth, a large landowner, for seventy-five dollars. The deed executed November 6, 1821, and recorded December 17, 1821, reads:

"This indenture, made this sixth day of November, in the year . . . one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, between Nicholas Longworth and Susan, his wife, of the first part, and Morris Moses, Joseph Jonas, David I. Johnson, Moses Nathan, Abraham Jonas, Solomon Moses, in trust as a burying ground for the Jewish church of Cincinnati, of the second part, witnesseth that the said Nicholas Longworth for and in consideration of the sum of seventy-five dollars, Mi. Exp. Co. paper, lawful money of the United States, to him in hand well and duly paid by the said Morris, Joseph, David, Moses, Abraham and Solomon, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, Hath granted, bargained, sold, aliened, released, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents grant, bargain, sell, alien, release, convey and confirm unto the said Morris, David, etc., their heirs and assigns forever all that certain piece of land near Cincinnati in the western part of the town on the west side of Western Row, adjoining the farm of Wm. Betts, deceased, commencing on the southeast corner of said Betts' farm and on Western Row, 25 feet and the same width back on parallel lines 50 feet, of which the line of Betts' farm is one. To be held as tenants in common in trust for their people etc. Consideration seventy-five dollars. (N. Longworth et ux. General Warranty to the Trustees of the Jewish Synagogue.)"

According to a deed executed February 28, 1826, and recorded March 8, 1826, the same Nicholas Longworth

donated to the congregation, through Morris Moses and David I. Johnson, a plot of ground adjoining the original purchase. With the growth of the community even this enlarged ground was found to be too small, and on September 11, 1838 (deed recorded September 27), the congregation bought an additional portion from Nicholas Longworth. This property which is still in the possession of the congregation is situated on the corner of Chestnut street and Central avenue, the present name of the street, which in the olden day was called Western Row. It was used as a burying ground till 1850. There are in the cemetery some eighty-five stones, covering, as far as can be determined, the remains of about one hundred persons. The inscriptions are still for the most part quite legible. The oldest legible inscriptions are these: a babe, the son of Abraham and Lucia Jonas, that died in February, 1825; Lucia Orah Jonas, mentioned above; on March third of that same year, 1825, Hart Levi died, and one week thereafter, on March 10, the young wife of Eliezer Symonds, at the tender age of nineteen years. This cemetery, now fenced in by a high brick wall, is the oldest Jewish landmark in the western section of the country. It is well nigh half a century since the last body was laid to its final rest therein; the life of a great city ebbs and flows about it; the dead slumber on unheeding; may they rest in peace!

A brief biographical account of the pioneer may well close this sketch of the beginnings of Jewish life in the Ohio Valley. Although a merchant he had a literary bent. As already stated, he delivered the first address in the first synagogue, and also the first address in the second synagogue, after its dedication in 1852. In 1842 he wrote for the Reverend Isaac Leeser's magazine, *The Occident*, an essay on "The Jews of Ohio," which has proven of much assistance in the preparation of this paper. His daughter informs me that upon the death of Grace Aguilar in 1847, his sister, who had been a friend of the gifted young

authoress, wrote him from England, asking him in Mrs. Aguilar's name to continue a correspondence which Grace Aguilar had commenced with a Christian minister in defense of her faith. He complied with the request. This correspondence was also lost in the fire at Sheffield.

He continued to take a most active interest in Jewish affairs, served as president of the congregation in the years 1843-44 and 1847-48, and was a moving spirit in the formation of religious schools and the conducting of Jewish communal institutions. He was also prominent as a politician in the Democratic party and served in the State Legislature in the years 1860-61.

For a long time he had been accumulating literary material, and during the latter years of his life had been writing a book which, however, has never been published; the book had three divisions; first, a refutation of M. Renan's history of the people of Israel; second, a review and criticism of the mythology of the Bible, contained in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis; third, the Signs of the Times, being a Review of the Prophecies, past, present and future. This third section appeared in the columns of the *Israelite* of Cincinnati.

In the year 1867, upon the death of his second wife, he removed from Cincinnati to Mobile, Alabama, to take up his residence with his daughter, Mrs. Moses. He lived but a little over two years longer. His death took place at the country residence of the family, Spring Hill, six miles from Mobile, and he was buried on his seventy-seventh birthday, May 5, 1869.

Upon receiving word of his demise the Board of Trustees of the congregation which he had been most instrumental in founding, adopted these resolutions:

WHEREAS, We have lately heard, with much sorrow and regret, of the death of our most esteemed co-religionist and fellow-citizen, who departed this life in the city of Mobile, Alabama, on the fourth day of May, 1869, and whose loss

we mourn as the founder of our holy congregation, the pioneer of Judaism in the west, and the truly conscientious, pious Jew, therefore, be it

Resolved, That in the death of our much lamented brother we fully realize the finger of God, who has permitted him to live out his allotted time in all honor and integrity, and has called him home to His mercy seat on the fulfillment of his mission on earth.

Resolved, That we recognize in Joseph Jonas, the Israelite, indeed, and free from guile, whose course through a long life has been such as all good men may study and emulate, and whose peaceful end at the age of seventy-seven all may envy.

Resolved, That as the founder of our holy congregation, as the first Jew that trod this city, we owe him a debt of gratitude which we can only pay by acknowledgment, but for which we pray that the Almighty will reward him as he, in our humble judgment, deserves.

Resolved, That in recognition of his services in the cause of Judaism we recommend that this, our inadequate testimonial, be inserted in our congregational records; that a copy of the same be sent to the family of the deceased, and that it be inserted in the *Israelite* of this city and the *Jewish Messenger* of New York.

It is only eighty years since the Jewish pioneer set foot upon the soil of Ohio, but the span of a life time; as in many other localities of the United States the growth and development of Jewish congregational and institutional life have been rapid; but the account of this development does not belong here. I have attempted merely to set forth the memorials of the early days made possible by the few records that have been preserved.

A BRAVE FRONTIERSMAN.

BY REVEREND HENRY COHEN, *Galveston, Texas.*

Major-General L. M. Openheimer, of the Texas Volunteer Guard, recently called my attention to an article entitled, "The Island of Death," by General James B. Fry, U. S. A., which appeared in *The Army and Navy Magazine*, of August 26, 1893. Reference therein is made to an anonymous "little Jew" who, from the account given, must have been among the bravest of that gallant fifty who, against terrible odds, and amidst gruesome surroundings, successfully quelled a most dangerous Indian outbreak. Believing that the name of such a hero, linked inseparably with the exploit, should go down to posterity, I was anxious to find out the name of the "little Jew." This anxiety was laid to rest by the information conveyed to me by Major-General Openheimer, that the full account of the battle appeared in *Harper's Monthly*, of June, 1895, contributed by General G. A. Forsyth, U. S. A., the gallant commander of the forces engaged in the fight. In this thrilling article, among the names of the fifty men who were in the engagement is that of S. Schlesinger, the only semblance to a Jewish name in the list, the writer prefacing the *dramatis personæ* with the following remark: "As of late years there has been some discussion as to who were the men who were with me in the fight on the Arickaree Fork of the Republican river, I herewith append the list as copied from the original roll. All but four of these men were native Americans, and a number of them college graduates, and I never saw but one company of enlisted men whom I thought exceeded them in general intelligence." *

* "A Frontier Fight," by General A. G. Forsyth, U. S. A., *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, June, 1895, page 43.

Feeling a keen interest in the matter, with especial reference to the "little Jew," I put myself in communication with General Forsyth, from whom I received the following :

" WILKESBARRE, PA., *December 27th*, 1897.

MY DEAR RABBI COHEN :

Pardon my delay in answering your inquiry of December 7th regarding Mr. Samuel Schlesinger, who served under my command in the Western frontier in 1868, and who was with me in my fight with the Sioux Indians in the Arickaree Fork. I was very busy when I got your letter, and it was put aside to answer, but in some way I allowed myself to forget it—not intentionally, I assure you, for I have a high admiration of the courage and splendid pluck and endurance of young Schlesinger on the occasion above mentioned. Schlesinger was a mere lad at the time, probably nineteen or twenty years of age. He had never been in action prior to our fight with the Indians, and throughout the whole engagement, which was one of the hardest, if not the very hardest ever fought on the Western plains, he behaved with great courage, cool persistence, and a dogged determination that won my unstinted admiration, as well as that of his comrades, many of whom had seen service throughout the War of the Rebellion on one side or the other. I can accord him no higher praise than that he was the equal in manly courage, steady and persistent devotion to duty, and unswerving and tenacious pluck, of any man in my command. It is a real pleasure for me to state this fact. When I wrote the account of my fight on the Arickaree Fork for publication, I took especial pains to commend some of my men, but the article was too long and was cut somewhat by the editor. I especially mentioned the pluck and endurance of this young son of Israel, and spoke of him as a worthy descendant of King David.

In the summer of 1895, a short time after I had written the account of my fight that appeared in *Harper's Monthly*, I was abroad, and while there I had a letter from Mr. Schlesinger, who is a merchant in Cleveland. I am looking forward to meeting him some day with great satisfaction. . . .

I am, sir, with sincere respect,

Very truly yours,

[Signed]

GEO. A. FORSYTH.

To RABBI HENRY COHEN."

In a subsequent letter from the distinguished General (dated from Washington, D. C., March 11th, 1898) he again refers to Schlesinger as "brave, cool, and of sound sense."

The circumstance of the fight is better told in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* (June, 1895), but the special features that characterize Schlesinger as a brave frontiersman are narrated in *The Army and Navy Magazine* (August 26th, 1893), from which I glean the following :

The pressure on the government during the War of the Rebellion deprived the Indian frontier of the military protection which it much needed and had previously received. The Indians, fully recognizing the advantages which our internal struggle gave them, became aggressive, exacting, and insulting. They preyed upon the settlers, stopped and robbed the overland stages, seized stock, took possession of station-houses, and, when hungry passengers were seated at their meals, turned them out, and themselves consumed all the scanty supply of provisions, and sometimes added murder to their other offenses. Seeing the weakness of our military posts, they insulted and taunted the garrisons, and occasionally robbed them.

But, notwithstanding this condition of things on the frontier the importance of connecting the Atlantic and Pacific by rail, enhanced by the Rebellion, was not forgotten. Encouraged by the inflation of the currency and its free circulation, and backed by the spirit of enterprise and daring which the war brought into the highest activity, the Union and Kansas Pacific railroads were pushed out into the Indian hunting grounds. This was a serious matter for the savages. Major General Hancock says, in an official report made in 1867: "The extension of our great lines of travel across the plains is driving away the buffalo, and thus interfering with the hunting grounds of the Indians and with their only means of support. The government makes no sufficient arrangements to support them where the game has disappeared, and they are obliged to roam over the country after the buffalo to support themselves."

With the game driven from his hunting grounds by the opening and constant use of our lines of travel, forbidden

by us to roam at large in pursuit of it, required to live upon certain reservations of land, with no other means of subsistence than those afforded by the government, and those wholly insufficient, and with strong convictions as to his rights and his ability to defend them, the Indian was not likely to be quiet.

In the winter of 1866 the situation was alarming to the settlers, and was rendered more critical by the divided responsibility of the Indian Bureau and the War Department. Military commanders were only able by the most judicious management to secure from the Indians partial observance of the inadequate treaties in force. Satanta, a Kiowa chief, told Major Douglas, commanding Fort Dodge, that the Sioux were coming down to make coalition against us in the spring, and that they intended to make war.

The Cheyennes, who fiercely opposed the construction of the railways, sought a council with General Palmer, commanding at Fort Ellsworth, Kansas, where the road now crosses the Smoky Hill river. Preparations were at once made for the reception of these barbaric lords, with their wild retainers. Two hospital tents were pitched, one for the council and the other to serve as quarters for the guests. A couple of fat steers were slaughtered, and coffee, sugar, and bread in abundance were provided ; for these dusky diplomats never talk on an empty stomach if they can avoid it.

They arrived at the appointed time—"Roman Nose," a great war leader ; "Black Kettle," principal chief, and "Big Head," a noted young brave—accompanied by their favorite wives and a few young bucks.

When the envoys had rested a day and gorged themselves with fresh beef, the officers of the garrison, in full dress, assembled with the chief at the council chamber. After the customary hand-shaking the whites arranged themselves across one side of the tent, facing the reds who completed the rectangle. For some minutes there was a quiet but diligent puffing at a single stone pipe, or calumet, which

was passed around from mouth to mouth, with a covert wipe of the stem from each pale face as it came to his turn.

The general welcomed the Indians in a few well-chosen words, and asked the object of their visit. Black Kettle, a fine looking man of middle age and heavy features and frame, arose. He possessed great influence with his tribe, and by his wise council had more than once averted war. His dress was simple, with the exception of a massive necklace of crescent-shaped silver plates, from the front of which hung a heavy silver medal bearing the profile, in relief, of Washington. It had been presented long before by the President of the United States to one of Black Kettle's ancestors, and was worn with evident pride.

This chief spoke at some length and to the point. It was the old story of honest, oppressed Indians, and treacherous, tyrannical white men. Much truth was told with native eloquence, and the Great Father was asked to stop the building of the iron road, which would soon drive away the buffalo and leave his children without food.

After the hearty grunt of approval by his followers had subsided, Roman Nose moved in a solemn and majestic manner to the center of the chamber.

As he warmed with his topic his great chest heaved and fire flashed from his eyes. His speech was brief, as became a soldier, and to the same effect as Black Kettle's. Unlike the latter, however, he said that never before had he taken the hand of the white man in friendship, but that he could be a strong friend as well as a bitter foe, and it was for the white chief and the Great Father to decide which part he should play in the future. As the sequel will show, this was probably the last, as well as the first, time he and the whites joined hands in friendship.

General Palmer assured the speakers that their words should be faithfully reported at Washington, but made them no promises.

Our war in the interior had now ended, and our troops

were quite ready to turn their attention to the frontier. Accordingly, Major General Hancock moved out in March 1867, with a force consisting of some fifteen hundred men, composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with instructions from General Sherman not to hold the Indians to account for some murders which had been the subject of complaint, but "to make among the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas and Comanches, a display of force; to notify them that if they wished for war they could have it; and to explain to them fully that hereafter they must keep off the route of travel—railroads and other roads; that all depredations, and molestation of travelers must cease forthwith, and that all threatening of our military posts by them, verbally or by message, or otherwise, must cease at once, or war would ensue."

The Indians were neither prepared nor disposed to accept this challenge as suddenly and as formally as it was offered. They evidently construed the movements as meaning immediate or prospective war; and, to gain time, they used diplomacy with skill worthy of a Beaconsfield or a Schouvaloff. Councils and talks without number and without significance or sincerity were held.

The state of affairs in the spring of 1867 is shown by General Hancock's official report of May 14th, in which he says: "It is my present intention to maintain active operations during the summer, and as late into the winter as practicable (unless peace be made meanwhile), against all Sioux and Cheyennes (save friendly bands of the former) who may be found between Arkansas and the Platte."

The instances of fortitude and bravery which occurred during the bloody struggle which now set in are almost "as numerous as grains of sand on the sea shore." One engagement furnished an exhibition of courage, skill and endurance unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, in any age or clime.

General Hancock had been called to other duty, and

General Sheridan had succeeded him, being accompanied by Brevet Colonel George A. Forsyth, Major Ninth United States Cavalry, as acting inspector general. This officer, chafed by the restraint and inactivity of his staff position, begged of his chief a command in the field; but at that period, close on the heels of the great war and the army reduction which followed it, leaders were more abundant than followers, and all of the rank and file that could be brought into the field were under command of Sully, Custer, and other able and distinguished officers, and no opportunity for the assignment of Colonel Forsyth, according to his rank, presented itself. But as additional forces were much needed he was told that if quite willing to do so he might raise and lead a force of fifty men, not to be enlisted, but to be *hired* for the occasion at the rate of thirty-five dollars per month, each man to bring his own horse and equipments, receiving forty-five cents per day for the use thereof, but to be supplied with arms, ammunition and rations by the government.

The offer was promptly accepted and the men were soon found in the immediate vicinity of Fort Hays. Several of them were ex-soldiers who, having served out their enlistments long before, had adopted the life of the frontiersman, thus making the best possible material for the purpose in hand. The rest were the ordinary run of their kind, with two exceptions, the first being that of an American of far above the average stature, who appeared pre-eminent in knowledge of the Indians of the country, daring—in short, possessing all the qualities which constitute leadership upon such occasions. In the confidence he inspired he was a second Roderick Dhu. The other seemed to be inferior, and in all respects unfit for the service; a Jew, small, with narrow shoulders, sunken chest, quiet manner, and piping voice, but little knowledge of fire-arms or horsemanship; he was indeed unpromising as a son of Mars, and, after forty-nine had been obtained, was accepted only in order that he might be counted on the

rolls to make up the fifty and thus enable the expedition to start. Lieutenant Frederick H. Beecher, Third United States Infantry, at his urgent solicitation, was assigned as second in command. He was one of the marvelous products of our Civil War. Active, intelligent, and distinguished during that long contest, when he came out of it he had lost the use of one leg, yet insisted upon serving on the active, instead of the retired list. The embodiment of energy and bravery, rest and fear were words without meaning to him. A noted guide and good rifle shot was dubbed acting lieutenant, and one of the men, being a doctor, acted as surgeon for the party.

Thus organized, each man including the officers, armed with a Spencer carbine, and a revolver, and supplied with one hundred and twenty rounds of ammunition, partly carried on four pack mules, and seven days rations (consisting principally of bread and salt), in each man's haversack, the command took the field.

After scouting for some days, a message was received at Fort Wallace from the Governor of Colorado, saying that the settlers between Bison Basin and Harbinger Lake were hard pressed by an overwhelming force of Indians, and begging that Colonel Forsyth would march promptly to their defense. No orders nor formalities were awaited. The command turned at once in the direction indicated. Other depredations by the same Indians were soon discovered, and their trail was struck and rapidly followed. It led to the headwaters of Beaver Creek and thence up to the Arickaree fork of the Republican river. The repeated efforts of the Indians to mislead their pursuers by dispersing in various directions from time to time, were unsuccessful, and on the 14th of September, 1867,* the large, fresh trail of a reassembled force was struck and pursued hotly until the

* General Forsyth gives the year as 1868. *Harper's Monthly*, June, 1895, "A Frontier Fight," pages 42-62, and private correspondence as above.

afternoon of the 16th. At that time, although not an Indian had been seen, the observant and experienced followers knew that a fight must inevitably take place next day. As the command had no provisions left except biscuit for one day, and no time to hunt game, it was desirable to bring on and end the combat at the earliest possible moment. Instead, therefore, of marching as usual until night, the commander, finding a good grazing spot, resolved to go into camp about five o'clock that afternoon, to give his animals rest and grass and get fully prepared for the events of the morrow.

It was well that he halted. The Indians had a cunning ambuscade laid for him near by, thinking he would march until dusk and fall into it just at the end of a hard day's journey. The bivouac was established on the bank of the Arickaree, in which stream there were but a few inches of running water. The surrounding country was an open but undulating plain, with hills and ridges a mile or two away, and a few scrubby wild plum trees here and there in low places. A sand island in the middle of the stream, directly behind the bivouac, was fringed with willows, and bore a few stunted trees.

The horses were carefully picketed, a guard posted, and the men lay down near their horses, with their weapons in their hands. The commander was up before daylight and on the lookout, while others yet slept. Peering steadfastly into the surrounding gloom he saw, before there was hardly a tinge of light, the stealthy movement of the approaching foe. He instantly called to his men to hold on to their horses and prepare for attack. The call was not a moment too soon. The Indians rushed in, shaking buffalo robes and blankets, yelling and whooping, for the purpose of stampeding and running off the animals. This was the first move in their plan of attack. It failed, and a few rounds drove them back.

But as day dawned their overwhelming numbers and their preparations for a general advance became visible. Colonel Forsyth instantly decided to take position on the sand island

behind him. It was oval in shape, some forty feet wide and two hundred feet long, and was separated from the mainland by a mere thread of water. The well directed fire of three chosen marksmen posted in the grass kept the Indian skirmishers at bay while the movement of men and animals to the island was effected. The animals were tied securely to bushes, and the men were distributed in a circle and ordered to lie down, and as soon as possible dig rifle pits for themselves in the sand. The only intrenching tools were pocket knives and hands; but the fire of the enemy hastened the work, and in a few minutes the only man in sight was the commander, who still walked erect from point to point, instructing and encouraging the men. He went under cover only when one of the men, having completed his own shelter, prepared a pit for his chief.

An annoying and desultory fire was kept up by the Indians until about nine o'clock, when preparations for a grand assault became visible. Large numbers of dismounted warriors, armed with Spencer, Sharp or Henry rifles (as all of the braves were), and many boys with bows and arrows were seen crawling through the grass and getting their position in easy range of the island. Further away on the open plain the mounted storming party formed for the charge. The dismounted men opened a terrific fire upon the island and the boys clouded the air with arrows.

The plan of the foe was promptly and fully comprehended by Colonel Forsyth. Galling and destructive as the fire from the grass was, he would not permit his men to answer it, but held every gun in readiness to open, at the word, upon the charging party, which he knew would soon rush on to ride over and slaughter them. The fire slackened; women and children lining the hills, just out of range, began their unearthly yells and wild dances, and three hundred mounted warriors, painted and stripped, with the "dog soldiers"—desperadoes from various tribes—in front, all led by a grand chief whose waist was girdled by a

crimson sash, charged at full speed, in solid column and with deafening war whoops, upon the devoted and determined little band of heroes. Not a shot was fired by our men until the confident and exulting savages were within thirty yards of the rifle pits. Then at the word of command the Island of Death opened, and before its unerring aim and rapid volleys the front of the assaulting column halted and fell as if it had pitched headlong against an impenetrable wall. The rear spread away to the right and left and sought safety in flight.

The savages were evidently dismayed and disheartened at their sudden and crushing repulse. The ground was strewn with dead and dying warriors. Several bodies were within a few yards of the breastworks. Nearest, lay the superb but lifeless form of Roman Nose, the red tide from his hot veins saturating the crimson sash which encircled his naked body. During the siege the Indians resorted to daring by day and to cunning by night to remove these bodies, but without success. The loss of the war chief's life and body was a fatal blow. The firing almost ceased, and it was not until two o'clock in the afternoon that another assault was attempted. It was prepared, conducted, received, and repulsed, quite like the first one. A third, similar in all respects, took place about four in the afternoon, but this effort was much feebler than the two which preceded it, and the gallant little band felt that it must prepare for a siege, but need not fear another assault.

A September rain began, and at last the long and bloody day drew to a close and night threw a thick, wet mantle over besiegers and besieged. Not until then did the latter find time to look calmly and deliberately upon the desperate situation. Every horse and mule was killed by the enemy's fire early in the action. As the last one went down an Indian called out in audible and unbroken English: "There goes the last d——d horse down." Lieutenant Beecher, shot through the side, had died in great agony before dark.

Three men, including the doctor, lay dead in the trenches ; two others were mortally, and seventeen more, among them Colonel Forsyth, severely wounded. Before ten o'clock Forsyth had been shot in the right thigh, the bullet lodging near the skin on the inner side. A few hours afterwards a ball entered his left leg below the knee, completely shattering the bone, and before night, as he was lifted up to look over the breastwork, a third bullet grazed the top of his head, making a painful scalp wound and chipping out a small piece of the skull.

The peril and location of the party were wholly unknown to their friends. Fort Wallace, the nearest point from which succor could be expected, was nearly a hundred miles away. Without provisions and surrounded by more than nine hundred well armed, well mounted, fierce and confident warriors, the situation was one to appall the stoutest heart. But these heroes were not daunted. The intrepid commander, forgetting his three painful wounds, from one of which he had himself cut out the ball, briefly summed up the case: "No shot," said he, "has been wasted. We have plenty of ammunition, abundance of horse and mule meat and can get water by a little digging through the sand. We will yet win the fight or sell our lives dearly in the attempt. Let a well be sunk, connect the rifle pits by a continuous parapet, and strengthen the lines with saddles, and, as far as possible, with the bodies of the dead horses. Bring in the saddle blankets for the comfort of the wounded, and cut the horse and mule flesh into strips for food. Let two men, who are willing to risk their lives, take my rough map of the country and pocket compass, and try to-night to steal through the enemy's lines and make their way to Fort Wallace. When this is all done," he continued, "and the wounded are cared for in a secure place to be dug out for the purpose, you can rest in peace until morning, for these Indians never venture upon a night attack."

The instructions were cheerfully and promptly carried out. The two scouts left the island about midnight. To escape pursuit in case they got out, they went in their stocking feet, walking backwards, so that if the enemy discovered the tracks in the morning they might think they were made by Indians in moccasins going towards the island, and not by the white men leaving it.

By dawn the heroic garrison was ready for the day's business. The scouts had not been driven back, but there was a painful doubt as to whether they had passed the enemy's line or lost their lives in the attempt. All day a steady but not destructive fire was kept up by the Indians, and was answered, whenever it could be done, with effect. There was no disposition to renew the desperate charges of the day before. The Indians, exasperated by the coolness and courage of the whites and the deliberate, galling fire which they kept up, sought fruitlessly, by flags of truce, pretended withdrawals, and other devices to draw them from their intrenchments. Challenges and insults in the grossest language were offered, but nothing disturbed for a moment the caution, vigilance, and coolness of the garrison.

So the day wore on and when night came, with only raw mule meat for supper, the wounded and weary sank to rest. Before morning two more men started out to pass the lines and try to bring succor. They were, however, unable to get through, and returned. The third day passed as the second, but the two men who started out on the third night did not return. The fourth day passed as the two preceding ones. No more scouts were sent out. The meat now began to get putrid, and it was sprinkled with gunpowder, in the hope that the saltpeter in the powder would aid in preserving the meat or make it a little less unpalatable. But before the day was over it could no longer be eaten, and the pangs of extreme hunger began. A wolf that ventured too near the lines at night was killed by a lucky shot, and served to appease for a short time the cravings of a few, but by the

fifth day the suffering from hunger was intense. Then for the first time a small fire was made of such sticks as could be gathered together, and by charring the putrid meat they were able to use it a little longer.

On the fifth day the Indians began to disappear, and some of the men ventured out to gather some wild plums near by. The plums, and a jar of pickles, which was found on the first camp-ground, aided to sustain life. By the seventh day the Indians had entirely disappeared, but the beleaguered force was now too weak to move. With no word from their scouts, and starvation staring them in the face, there was, with one exception, no despondency or complaint. On the eighth day some of the men became delirious, and the wounded were in a dreadful condition. The shattered bone of Colonel Forsyth's leg stuck through the skin, and maggots had taken possession of the horrible sore. The eighth night wore away with troubled dreams of rich feasts and wild awakenings to actual famine. The time seemed near when neither feasts nor famine could be helpful or hurtful. Pain had almost passed away, when, on the morning of the ninth day men came in sight. Succor had arrived at last, but the poor sufferers were too far gone to cheer or even rejoice. Perhaps they felt instinctively that the road to relief was shorter and smoother by way of death than by a return to life.

The shrewd and plucky scouts who left on the first night, reached Fort Wallace on the third day thereafter, and those who got out on the third night happened to fall in with a scouting party of troops. Relief, which came with all haste from both sources, reached the fatal island at the same hour. The stench from this contracted battle field was so horrible that strong men could hardly endure it long enough to remove the living and bury the dead.

Let us not dwell upon the painful journey to the fort, the dangerous surgical operations, and the tedious recovery of the wounded. The remnants of the party which had left the

post but a few days before, full in numbers and vigor, for the noble purposes of defending helpless women and children against the merciless savages, returned to it with thinned ranks and mutilated and fainting bodies, but their high purpose had been accomplished. Their victory was complete. They had triumphed over every weakness of body and spirit as well as over a most desperate foe. If there is a lesson in the memory of great deeds it should be found here. But, alas! the bright chapter which they added to their country's glory at such a heavy cost has been passed over almost unnoted. The empty honor of a "brevet" is the only recognition Colonel Forsyth received for his heroic conduct in this affair. Can bravery, gallantry and devotion to duty, flourish under a military system in which such services are neither rewarded nor remembered?

It is due to truth and justice to state that in this remarkable party of fifty there were but forty-nine heroes. The large, knowing, and confident man on whom special reliance was placed in the beginning, utterly failed in the hour of trial. Quickly making a rifle pit for himself, no arguments, threats nor persuasion could induce him to rise from it, or fire a shot while the enemy was in sight. He insisted that they always kept a "bead drawn on him," and that the least exposure would be certain death. But the loss of this man's services was fully made up by the bravery, skill, and untiring activity of the despised "little Jew." There was no sphere of gallantry or usefulness in which he was not conspicuous.

* "When the foe charged on the breastworks,
With the madness of despair,
And the bravest souls were tested,
The little Jew was there.

* "The Island of Death," by General James B. Fry, U. S. A., *Army and Navy Magazine*, August 26, 1893. Pages 3-11.

“ When the weary dozed on duty,
Or the wounded needed care,
When another shot was called for,
The little Jew was there.

“ With the festering dead around them,
Shedding poison in the air,
When the crippled chieftain ordered,
The little Jew was there.”

SOME EARLY AMERICAN ZIONIST PROJECTS.*

BY MAX J. KOHLER, A. M., LL. B., *New York.*

The great interest the Zionist Congress, held at Basle recently, has aroused in the idea of the establishment of a Jewish State, renders timely a consideration of some earlier Zionist projects. The scope and aims of our society have suggested a limitation of this subject to this continent, but both schemes formed on this continent for the establishment of a Jewish State, and schemes formed elsewhere, designed to be executed in America, will be discussed. Of course, this paper does not even claim to exhaust all the projects that were formed. The attempt has been made throughout this article to avoid any controversial matter bearing on the Basle Congress project. I use the term "Zionist Project" here in a sense as broad and comprehensive as was given to it by the Basle Congress, so as to include all projects for assuring to the Jews "a publicly, legally assured home," with some degree of autonomy. Probably the inclusion of projects for the establishment of a Jewish State elsewhere than in Palestine, makes our use of the term "Zionist Project" broader than it is in the official declaration of purposes of the Basle Congress, but as the latter repudiated almost wholly a religious purpose, the idea of a Jewish State, wherever to be located, is the important element.

Attention has often been called to the fact, noted by Dr. Kayserling in his *Christopher Columbus* (p. 80) that Columbus began the journal of his first voyage with the words: "After the Spanish monarchs had expelled all the Jews from

* Read at the meeting of December 30, 1897.

all their kingdoms and lands in January, in that same month they commissioned me to undertake the voyage to India with a properly equipped fleet." It has also been frequently noted that on August 2, 1492, the Spanish Jews began their wanderings because of their expulsion from Spain, while on the very next day, Columbus sailed from Spain with his fleet of three ships to discover a new world (*Id.*, p. 89). It is not strange that this coincidence, in the light of future history, has often induced Jewish poets, preachers and writers to hail America as the Jews' "New Holy Land," in place of Zion. But the introduction of the Inquisition prevented any well defined plans for the formation of a Jewish State here, and so we cannot point to any Zionist project in these early days, not even in Brazil, where thousands of Jews settled prior to the middle of the seventeenth century in districts of their own, although the concluding paragraph in Dr. Kayserling's above-cited work once more suggests the idea: "In spite of such persecution, thousands of secret Jews fled, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from the Iberian Peninsula to the Indies, and especially to America—to the New World, which was not merely a land rich in gold and silver mines, but also the land where the light of freedom first shone upon the adherents of Judaism."

More can be said in favor of classifying the Jewish colony established in Curaçao in 1652 under the authority of the Dutch West India Company in this way. This is described very briefly by Judge Daly in his *Settlement of the Jews in North America* as follows (p. 9): "In 1652, a tract of land of two leagues along the coast for every fifty families, and of four leagues for every hundred families, was granted in the island of Curaçao to Joseph Nunez de Fonseca and others, to found a colony of Jews in that island. Fonseca, who was afterwards a merchant in Curaçao, together with one Jan de Illan, who went out as a patroon, made this attempt, but it was not successful, there being not more than twelve settlers on the tract." Further consideration of this scheme will be

dispensed with herein, however, as one of our co-workers has proposed to treat this settlement more fully, in the light of some unpublished documents in the archives of the State of New York at Albany, which he will utilize.

Similar is a grant made by the French West India Company to David Nassi, a Portuguese Jew, in 1659, by a charter which authorized him to found a Jewish colony in Cayenne; his countrymen were to be allowed there the enjoyment of every civil and religious privilege, on condition that they should grant the same without reserve to all others who might choose to be their fellow colonists. Further particulars and authorities on this grant may be found in a paper by Reverend George A. Kohut, on "Early Jewish Literature in America" in No. 3 of our *Publications* (pp. 105, 136-7), from which the foregoing facts as to this grant have been extracted.

But prior to 1659, several other projects were formed which merit our attention. One of these is embraced in the "Privileges Granted to the People of the Hebrew Nation That Are To Go To The Wilde Cust," contained in the Egerton MSS. in the British Museum. This grant has been several times referred to heretofore.* It was commented upon by Mr. Lucien Wolf in an interesting and valuable paper read by him before the Jewish Historical Society of England on February 7th, 1897, on "American Elements in the Re-Settlement," and was printed in the *Jewish Chronicle* for February 19th, 1897, from which we have copied our account, contained in Appendix 1.† Mr. Wolf considers this a grant made by the English Government during the Commonwealth, about 1654, to Jewish settlers in Surinam. Full liberty of conscience is provided for, and also exemption from court-attendance on Sabbath and holidays, burgher rights, the right themselves

**Anglo-Jewish Exhibition Catalogue*. London, 1887, p. 189, No. 137, quoted by Dr. Cyrus Adler in No. I of our *Publications*, p. 109. Also, *Anglo-Jewish Bibliography* by Jacobs and Wolf.

†See now *Trans. Jewish Hist. Soc., of England*, vol. III, pp. 82-84.

to select persons to govern their synagogues and administer the causes of their nation, two Hebrew representatives in the Assembly of Burgesses, the right to establish constitutions and customs to bind all Hebrews settling there, equal rights with those granted to persons of any other nation there, exemption from taxes for a term of years, freedom to freight their ships there, etc. It is rather remarkable that there is no more specific reference to the place where these privileges are to be enjoyed, than is indicated in the title, "Wilde Cust" (Coast), and also that the "Privileges" are neither signed nor otherwise subscribed.

Mr. Wolf, for reasons fully set out in his paper, considers these "Privileges" as grants from the British Government to Jews in Surinam, made about 1654, and rejects the alternative theory that it is a "memorandum of privileges granted by the Dutch themselves to refugees from Pernambuco who were willing to settle on other points of the Guiana Coast under the Netherland flag, and that it had been communicated to the English Committee of Trade and Plantations merely for their information." With full deference to Mr. Wolf's views, it seems to me that the latter theory is much more apt to be correct, than the view which he admits he reaches somewhat tentatively. It seems to me that the theory that this is a copy of grants made by the Dutch, furnished to England, will much more satisfactorily account for the want of precision as to locality in the grant, the utter absence of subscription or signature, the curious orthography, and, above all, the fact that the rights and privileges to be enjoyed by these Jewish colonists are in terms made commensurate with the rights enjoyed by the Jews in Amsterdam, Zealand, etc. It is scarcely conceivable that the British Government would execute a grant, even to Jewish refugees from Dutch colonies, which would define their rights merely by express reference to the privileges, rights and customs of the Jews in Amsterdam and Zealand.

The next project in point of time which we will consider

is one of the most extraordinary of all, for it is associated with the name of one of the most remarkable personages of the last century. The scheme was formed about 1749 by Maurice de Saxe, better known in German history as Moritz von Sachsen, and its purpose was to make him King of a Jewish State, which was to be erected in South America. The Margravine of Anspach has described the project as follows, in her *Memoirs*: "Marshal de Saxe took a fancy to become a king; and, on looking around him, as he found all thrones occupied, he cast his eyes upon that nation which for seventeen hundred years had neither sovereign nor country; which was everywhere dispersed and everywhere a stranger, and which consoles itself for its proscription by the hopes of riches. This extraordinary project occupied his attention for a considerable time. It is not known how far the Jews co-operated with him, nor to what point their negotiations were carried, nor whether his plans ever developed; but the project was well-known to the world, and his friends sometimes even joked with him on the subject." We have only very meagre accounts of this scheme; I am unable even to say whether he had abandoned it prior to his death in 1750.* The scheme is principally interesting on account of the character of its projector. He was Marshal of France, and Frederick the Great said of him: "I have seen the hero of France, the Turenne of Louis XV's time. This general could teach all the generals of Europe." He was a natural son of August II, King of Poland; his brother was Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and his niece was Dauphiness of France. He himself was sovereign Duke of Courland some years before this, until he was forced to abdicate by Russian intrigue. Had he lived a little longer, and continued to enlist all his energies in the project, it might have had a most important

* See a fuller account of this project with the authorities relating to it in an article by the writer in the *Menorah*, June, 1892.

effect on the history of the Jews in this pre-Mendelssohnian period.

We know even less of the details of the next project which we will consider, which led to the transmission of a "Memorial Sent by German Jews to the President of the Continental Congress" in 1783, which formed the subject of a paper by Dr. Kayserling in No. 6 of our *Publications*. Induced to act by the religious liberty provisions of the Pennsylvania Constitution, a German Jew whose identity is unknown to us, addressed this memorial to our then Chief-Executive, and asked in it to be informed on what terms a body of German Jews forming about 2,000 families, might settle in this country. The writer says: "We ask no more than to be permitted to become subjects of these thirteen provinces, and would gladly contribute two-fold taxes for their benefit, if we can only obtain permission to establish colonies at our own cost, and to engage in agriculture, commerce, arts and sciences." A vivid picture is painted by the writer of the disabilities and unfortunate conditions under which he and his co-religionists were laboring in Germany, and his avowed purpose is to escape from these by migration to America. Unfortunately we know nothing more about the project than is contained in copies of the letter printed contemporaneously in Germany.

A passing reference may also be made to a project formed by a Mr. W. D. Robinson, in 1819, and considered at some length by Judge Daly in his *Settlement of the Jews in North America* (pp. 92-96), looking to the formation of a large Jewish settlement in our upper Mississippi and Missouri Territory, on land to be purchased by the wealthier Jews of Europe, to which the poorer classes of Jews throughout Europe might be sent, to found an agricultural settlement. In a pamphlet published by Mr. Robinson in London in 1819, in advocacy of this scheme, he says: "To what part of the habitable globe can the Jews fly for an asylum, where they will be exempt from persecution and oppression? No part of Europe offers to them a secure or convenient refuge,

nor can they seek it in Asia or Africa.” He then remarks that “the United States of North America, where the field of enterprise is immense, which is the only government among civilized nations, that has wisely rejected any exclusive establishment, and where neither sect nor individual is molested on account of religion, is the only country upon earth that affords to them the means of regeneration, of security and comfort.” Of course nothing came of the project, and Judge Daly points out passages in the pamphlet tending to show that the writer was a land speculator who was intent on “booming” his wares.

. Another Zionist project deserving consideration was formed by an American convert to Judaism, Mr. Warder Cresson, of Philadelphia, about 1850. Mr. Cresson, or, as he preferred to call himself after his conversion, Michael Boaz Israel, belonged to a well-known and wealthy family, was himself an economist, and had been United States Consul at Jerusalem. He was deeply interested in religious matters and became more and more attached to the Jewish faith, until he left Christianity for Judaism, as is more fully indicated by his published writings. Familiarity with Eastern conditions as regards Jewish residents there, acquired by many years’ sojourn in Palestine, convinced him that relief could be afforded to the impoverished and indigent Jewish residents of the East, only by forming Jewish agricultural colonies in the Holy Land. Several years of successful farming in the outskirts of Philadelphia fitted him peculiarly to undertake such work, and his writings indicate considerable knowledge of practical agriculture and show him to have been a man of affairs in spite of their frequent interspersal with Bible texts. Accordingly, he established a Jewish agricultural colony in the valley of Raphaim, the celebrated battle-field of King David, near Jerusalem, about 1850, and devoted his private fortune as well as contributions received from others, to this plan. He enlisted the active interest and support of Rev. Isaac (Leeser) of Philadelphia, and of Dr. L. Philippson of Leipzig, in his project,

and in consequence, for a number of years, the *Occident* and the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, periodically published his circulars, appeals and reports of progress from the Holy Land. Through these and other channels he secured the co-operation of various other Palestinian Jewish settlers, and was in a large degree instrumental in interesting Judah Touro and Sampson Simson and their associates in Palestinian colonization projects, and in stimulating Sir Moses Montefiore, Adolphe Cremieux and Albert Cohn in their beneficent practical plans for Jewish amelioration. That such agricultural projects as Cresson's were essential, in order to render Jewish settlers of the Holy Land self-supporting, is evidenced not merely by such works as Finn's *Stirring Times*, Frankl's *Nach Jerusalem*, and Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore's *Diaries*, together with the various periodical accounts and descriptions of the day, but still more by the success of the numerous agricultural Jewish colonies formed in our own day, under the auspices of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, the Rothschilds and Baron de Hirsch, of which Cresson's colony seems to have been the prototype. A fair idea of his scheme is afforded by the concluding part of a circular widely distributed by him in 1852-3, and reprinted with approval in the *Occident* (vol. X, p. 600), reading as follows :

“ The efforts of the promoters of the above establishment will therefore be directed :

1. To facilitate the migration of such of them as desire to settle in the land *given by the Almighty in Covenant to Abraham and his seed forever*. See Gen. XVII, 7 and 8.

2. To procure and contribute those means which shall conduce, under the Divine Blessing, to ameliorate and improve the moral and physical condition of those Jews *already settled and desirous of settling*, in Palestine.

3. To particularly instruct and *assist* them in *agriculture* or in the rural sciences, and to reduce those parts settled to cultivation.

4. Contributing *without any restriction* upon their religious tenets (other than the foundation of instruction shall be based upon Moses and the Prophets according to the Written and Oral Law), those means which shall be appropriate to the establishment of infant, juvenile and adult schools among them.

5. That the Jewish people be invited to nominate committees in Jerusalem, America, England, France and Germany, to carry out these objects; or a committee respectively for each of them.

6. That a committee be nominated to collect information upon the subject of the Moral and Physical condition of the Jews in the Holy Land, and the present resources of that country.”*

* For references to Warder Cresson, his writings, and his project see *The Occident*, vol. VI, p. 456, “A Review of the Jerusalem Mission for 1846, the Fidelity of the Jews Tested;” vol. VI, p. 498, “The Tub, or House Turned Upside Down;” vol. VI, p. 599, “The Best Society Yet;” vol. VII, p. 35, “On Seeing God;” vol. VII, p. 122, “The Divine Attributes or Perfections;” vol. VII, p. 192 “Boaz’s Letters;” vol. VII, p. 324, “Reasons for becoming a Jew;” vol. X, pp. 361, 600, “Palestine and Its Prospects,” including the above-referred-to circular; vol. XII, p. 351, “Relief by Agriculture for Palestine;” vol. XIII, p. 133, “A Few Practical Observations before commencing Agriculture in the East;” vol. XIV, p. 122, “‘The Great Problem,’ solved and the Question forever Answered;” *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* (1854), vol. XVIII, pp. 369, 383, 451, 579; Frankel’s *Nach Jerusalem*, vol. II, p. 77. The British Museum Catalogue enumerates the following published books by Mr. Cresson:

The Two Witnesses, Moses and Elijah, 1844; *The Good Olive Tree Israel, showing the pre-eminence of Israel in the coming Dispensation*, 1844; *Jerusalem, the Center and Joy of the Whole Earth, and the Jew the recipient of the Glory of God*, 1844; *The Key of David, David the true Messiah. The two women who came to King David were designed to represent the true and false churches and the living and dead child, or Messiah. Also reasons for becoming a Jew*, Philadelphia, 1851.

I am indebted to Dr. Cyrus Adler for directing my attention to Mr. Cresson’s projects, and to Mr. Leon Hühner, Hon. Simon Wolf and Mr. I. S. Isaacs for several of the above references to him.

The remainder of this paper will be devoted to some remarkable projects set on foot by Mordecai M. Noah in this city, at least one of which attracted very wide attention. M. M. Noah was an enthusiastic Zionist, and we find not less than three different projects, formed at different periods of his life, designed to foster and set on foot a Jewish State. The earliest of these found expression in a *Discourse* subsequently printed in pamphlet form, delivered by him at the Consecration of the Synagogue of the Shearith Israel Congregation in the City of New York on April 17th, 1818.

Noah said: "Never were prospects for the restoration of the Jewish nation to their ancient rights and dominion more brilliant than at present. There are upwards of seven millions of Jews known to be in existence throughout the world, a number greater than at any period of our history, and possessing more wealth, activity, influence and talents than any body of people of their number on earth. The signal for breaking the Turkish sceptre in Europe will be their emancipation; they will deliver the north of Africa from its oppressors; they will assist to establish civilization in European Turkey, and may revive commerce and the arts in Greece; they will march in triumphant numbers, and possess themselves once more of Syria, and take their rank among the governments of the earth. This is not fancy. I have been too much among them in Europe and Africa—I am too well acquainted with their views and sentiments in Asia, to doubt their intentions. They hold the purse strings, and can wield the sword; they can bring 100,000 men into the field. Let us then hope that the day is not far distant when, from the operation of liberal and enlightened measures, we may look towards that country where our people have established a mild, just and honorable government, accredited by the world and admired by all good men."

Noah appears to have become convinced, however, very soon that the prospects for an early restoration to Palestine

were not as bright as he had supposed. He thereupon, devised his famous "Ararat" scheme, which was treated by Judge Daly in his *Settlement*, and is described even more fully in a very interesting paper on "Founding of the City of Ararat on Grand Island by Mordecai M. Noah," read by the Hon. Lewis F. Allen in 1866, before the Buffalo Historical Society,* and reprinted almost *in extenso* as Appendix II, hereto, to which reference is made. This city of Ararat was to be erected on Grand Island, in the Niagara River near Buffalo, as a city of refuge for the Jews of all nations. Noah induced some of his friends to purchase the greater part of the island, constituted himself "Governor and Judge of Israel," and proceeded to have the corner-stone for this new city laid on September 2, 1825, with impressive ceremonies, participated in by State and federal officials, Christian clergymen, Masonic officers and even American Indians. So great was the interest and the rush connected with these ceremonies, that it was found necessary to have the corner-stone laid in an Episcopalian church in Buffalo, instead of on Grand Island, as there were no sufficient means of transit to Grand Island. Of course Noah was the speaker and leader throughout. He utilized the occasion to issue a "Proclamation" as Judge and Governor of Israel, in which he announced the restoration of a Jewish State on Grand Island, preliminarily to a restoration of a Palestinian State; commanded that a census of the Jews be taken everywhere; levied a tax of three shekels in silver annually on all the Jews throughout the world, to be paid into his treasury; graciously permitted such Jews as wished to remain in their adopted homes, to stay there; directed Jewish soldiers in European armies to

* *Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society* vol. I, pp. 305-328. John Q. Adams, in his *Memoirs* (vol. V, p. 173) calls attention to the fact that already in 1820, Noah was interested in this American Jewish colonization project, and wished to be appointed *Chargé d'Affaires* to Vienna in order to promote the project.

remain in such service till further "orders"; ordained certain political and religious reforms; made provision for an election of the "Judge of Israel" every four years; commanded the Jews throughout the world to co-operate with him, including the long-lost ten tribes of Israel, whom he identified with the American Indians; and appointed as his Commissioners a number of distinguished European Jews. This proclamation is given in full in appendix II. Of course nothing came of the whole project, and the European appointees declined the commissionerships. The city was never actually built, and in fact Noah himself appears never even to have set foot on Grand Island. The corner-stone itself, after a number of years, was carried from Buffalo to Grand Island, and after a still longer interval, it was transferred to the Buffalo Historical Society collections. It is interesting to compare with some utterances of Anti-Zionists of our own day, the language of Abraham de Cologne, Grand Rabbi of Paris, in a letter written in 1825, to Noah, and published at the time in the *Journal des Debats*, in which, on behalf of himself and the Chief Rabbis at London, he declined the commissionerships proffered to them. He said: "To speak seriously, it is right at once to inform Mr. Noah that the venerable Messrs. Herschell and Meldola, chief rabbis at London, and myself, thank him, but positively refuse the appointments he has been pleased to confer upon us. We declare that, according to our dogmas, God alone knows the epoch of the Israelitish restoration; that he alone will make it known to the whole universe, by signs entirely unequivocal; and that every attempt on our part to re-assemble with any political—national design, is forbidden as an act of high treason against the Divine Majesty. Mr. Noah has doubtless forgotten that the Israelites, faithful to the principles of their belief, are too much attached to the countries where they dwell, and devoted to the governments under which they enjoy liberty and protection, not to treat as a mere jest, the chimerical consulate of a pseudo restorer.

As, however, justice requires some consideration to the absent, we should be sorry to refuse to him the title of a visionary of good intentions.”*

So much ridicule fell upon Noah in consequence of this project that we learn that he requested one of his friends to put the “corner-stone” aside, where it would not attract any one’s attention. However, with the lapse of time, his enthusiasm for the project grew strong once more, and hence, we find that in 1845 he delivered a discourse to a Christian audience, in the City of New York, in the nature of a plea to enlist them in his cause, on the “Restoration of the Jews,” and issued the same as a pamphlet of some fifty-five pages in length, a copy of which is now in my possession.† This third project appears to have escaped the attention of Noah’s biographers. He says in his preface: “I confidently believe in the restoration of the Jews, and in the coming of the Messiah, and believing that political events are daily assuming a shape which may finally lead to that great advent, I considered it a duty to call upon the free people of this country to aid us in any efforts which, in our present position, it may be deemed prudent to adopt, and I have the most abiding confidence in their good will and friendly feelings in aiding to restore us to liberty and independence.” The discourse is a very strong and interesting plea for a restoration, and shows that the author was not a whit less

* Niles’ *Weekly Register*, vol. XXIX, pp. 330–301 (Jan. 21, 1826). Compare also pp. 32, 54, 69, vol. XXX, p. 443, Daly’s *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, pp. 127–132, Hon. Simon Wolf’s *Mordecai Manuel Noah*, pp. 17–19.

† Strangely enough, a gentleman who was present at the meeting at which this paper was read, Mr. H. Kohn, New York City, remembers having been present when Noah read his paper, more than fifty years ago. He informs me that Noah had a vast audience which followed his discourse with interest. The published discourse was reviewed at considerable length at the time, for instance by Rev. Isaac Leeser in the *Occident* (vol. II, p. 600). Noah published a reply to this review in the same periodical (vol. III, p. 29).

familiar with political conditions of the day than with his Bible texts as arguments. He says (p. 10): "The political events in Syria, Egypt, Turkey and Russia indicate the approach of great and important revolutions, which may facilitate the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, and the organization of a powerful government in Judæa, and lead to that millennium which we all look for, all hope for, all pray for." The following passage, in its introductory prediction, as to England, indicates remarkable foresight (p. 34): "England must possess Egypt, as affording the only secure route to her possessions in India through the Red Sea; then Palestine, thus placed between the Russian possessions and Egypt, reverts to its legitimate proprietors, and for the safety of the surrounding nations, a powerful, wealthy, independent, and enterprising people are placed there, by and with the consent of the Christian powers, and with their aid and agency, the land of Israel passes once more into the possession of the descendants of Abraham. The ports of the Mediterranean will be again opened to the busy hum of commerce; the fields will again bear the fruitful harvest, and Christian and Jew will together, on Mount Zion, raise their voices in praise of Him whose covenant with Abraham was to endure forever, and, in whose seed all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. This is our destiny. Every attempt to colonize the Jews in other countries has failed; their eye has steadily rested on their own beloved Jerusalem, and they have said, 'The time will come, the promise will be fulfilled.'" . . (p. 37) "The first step is to solicit from the Sultan of Turkey permission for the Jews to purchase and hold land, to build houses and to follow any occupation they may desire, without molestation and in perfect security. There is no difficulty in securing this privilege for them. The moment the Christian powers feel an interest in behalf of the Jewish people, the Turkish government will secure and carry out their views, for it must always be remembered that the one hundred and twenty

millions of Mussulmen are also the descendants of Abraham. . . . The moment the Sultan issues his Hatti Scherif, allowing the Jews to purchase and hold land in Syria, subject to the same laws and limitations which govern Mussulmen, the whole territory surrounding Jerusalem, including the villages Hebron, Safat, Tyre, also Beyroot, Jaffa and other ports of the Mediterranean will be occupied by enterprising Jews. The valleys of the Jordan will be filled by agriculturists from the north of Germany, Poland, and Russia. Merchants will occupy the seaports, and the commanding positions within the walls of Jerusalem will be purchased by the wealthy and pious of our brethren. Those who desire to reside in the Holy Land, and have not the means, may be aided by these societies to reach their desired haven of repose. Christians can thus give impetus to this important movement, and emigration flowing in, and actively engaged in every laudable pursuit, will soon become consolidated and lay the foundations for the elements of government, and the triumph of restoration. This, my friends, may be the glorious results of any liberal movement you may be disposed to make in promoting the final destiny of the chosen people." (p. 39)

"While many who are now present may suppose that we shall not live to hear of the triumphant success of this project, yet my friends, it may be nearer than we imagine. Let us unfurl the standard, leaving the result to Him whose protecting influence overshadows us all—who is infinite in wisdom, unbounded and unrestricted in power. . . . If we do not move when He disposes events to correspond with the fulfillment of his promises, and the prediction of his prophets, we leave undone that which he entails upon us as a duty to perform, and the work is not accomplished, the day of deliverance has not arrived." Again (p. 49): "If I am right in this interpretation, and that this is the land which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia—(referring to an identification Noah attempts of America with the country referred to in the 18th chapter of Isaiah, the land which is to aid in the restoration of the

Jews)—what a glorious privilege is reserved for the free people of the United States, the only country which has given civil and religious rights to the Jews equal with all other sects, the only country which has not persecuted them, selected and pointedly distinguished in prophecy as the nation which, at a proper time, shall present to the Lord his chosen and trodden-down people, and pave the way for their restoration to Zion. But will they go, I am asked, when the day of redemption arrives? All will go who feel the oppressor's yoke. We may repose where we are free and happy, but those who, bowed to the earth by oppression, would gladly exchange a condition of vassalage for the hope of freedom; that hope the Jews never can surrender; they cannot stand up against the prediction of our prophets, against the promises of God; they cease to be a nation, a people, a sect, when they do so. Either the Messiah of the Jews has come, or he is yet to come. If he has come, we must cease praying for him to come; if he has not come, we are bound to seek him, not here, but in our own land, which has been given to us as a perpetual inheritance, and which we dare not surrender without at once surrendering our faith. We must not stop to ask whether the Jews will consent to occupy the land of Israel as free men. Restoration is not for us alone, but for millions unborn. There is no fanaticism in it; it is easy, tranquil, natural and gradual. Let the people go; point out the path for them in safety, and they will go, not all, but sufficient to constitute the elements of a powerful government, and those who are happy here may cast their eyes towards the sun as it rises, and know that it rises on a free and happy people beyond the mountains of Judæa, and feel doubly happy in the conviction that God has redeemed all his promises to Jacob."

It does not require any departure from the purposes announced in the beginning of this paper, to avoid all controversial matter, to render clear the remarkable coincidence between the arguments here presented—and also others not

quoted—with the arguments advanced by the Zionists to-day. It is veritably another case of history repeating itself! These early projects are worthy of special attention by reason of the fact that Mordecai M. Noah, for a quarter of a century preceding this time, had been the most distinguished member of the Jewish community in New York. Diplomat, politician, editor, playwright, lawyer and judge combined, he had achieved distinction in each field. He had been our Consul General to Tunis, and as such had traveled extensively throughout the East. He had been Sheriff of New York, and was subsequently Judge of General Sessions, as also Surveyor of the Port of New York, and was conspicuously active as founder of our first communal charitable organizations, as well as in the other lines above indicated. In spite of his eccentricities, therefore, his projects, no doubt, commanded and received careful consideration in his day, however much they have been effaced from public recollection by the course of years.

APPENDIX I.

From a paper on “American Elements in the Re-Settlement,” by Lucien Wolf.—*The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 18, 1897.

Before I conclude, however, I have a little discovery to submit to you. In the Egerton MSS. in the British Museum is a volume numbered 2,395 and entitled “Collection of official papers relating to English settlements in America and in the West Indies, chiefly documents submitted to and issuing from the Committee of Trade and Plantations, 1627–1690.” The eighth document in this volume runs as follows:

“Priveleges Granted To the People of the Hebrew Nation
That Are to Goe to the Wilde Cust.

1. That thei shall have Libertie of Conscience with exercise of their laws writes and ceremonies according to the

doctrine of their Ancients without anny Prohibition, and that thei shall have a place apointed for the Building of their Sinagoga or Sinagogas and Schooles, as allsoe sutch ground as thei shall make choice for their Burring in a separattees places according to their fashion, all according to the use and Fashion thei doe Possesse in Amsterdam.

2. That on the day of their Sabbath and the Rest of their fectivically dayes thei shall not be obliged to apeare in the court upon anny sutte at lawe or cause, and that what delligence or Acts that shall bee made against them or Past, on the said dayes shall bee given voide, and without force, and thei shall be excused of going to the Garde, except if (which God forbid) should bee urgent necessitie.

3. That all The Hebrews shall bee admitted for Burgezes as The People of the Province of Zeeland that shall live in the said Corte and that they shall with them enjoy, all the Previledges which thei shall enjoy.

4. That thei may make choice among themselves of sutch number of Persons as thei shall think convenient to Governe their Sinagogues, and to Administave the Causes of their nation, butt it is to bee understood that the execution shall be made of the officers of the Justice.

5. An whereas the intension of the said Hebrews is to Preserve themselves Peasibly, it shall be granted to them that if their should be among them anny Person or Persons of badd Proceedings and that should give them anny scandall, giving his or their names to the governour or to the justice whom it shall apartaine, with knowledgement of the cause, shall imburgue sutch Person or Persons for those Provinces, or for sutch Place as the Deputies of the said nation shall apointe.

6. That at all the generall meetings concerning the generall and comerse the said Lords commissiones shall be pleased to order that 2 of the Hebrews be called to Represent the body of their Nation that with the rest of the Burges, thei may allsoe serve the Rublick with their advise.

7. Grannting to anny Persons of anny Nation anny Previlledges the Hebrews shall enjoy them allsoe.

8. That what constitutions and Customes that the Hebrew nation shall make among themselves, them that shall goe to live there, of their nation, shall be oblided to observe them.

9. That not one may be opressed nor putt to Lawe for debts caused in Brazil or in other Kingdomes and States, except for them that shall bee caused in the said Provinces or on the said Cust.

10. That sutch as shall bee willing to goe shall have free Passage, as well in the States ships as in them that shall be freighted for the Purpose, with their Bagage and their Provisions, as allsoe of their matterialls for their land and building of a house for his famillie and thei all shall carrie sword and moskett.

11. That as soone as anny bee aRived at the said Cust shall appeare before the Governour or Comissioner, whome shall apointe each one soe much Land as thei cann Comand, and Purchase.

12. That each one shall Posesse as their owne the lands which shall bee appointed and given to them, and that thei may dispose of them to them that shall succede them, forever, as well by will as by contract, or obligation, or other wayes, in the same manner as each one may dispose of their owne goods in those Parts.

13. That every one shall have Libertie to goe to hunting and fishing each one in their Lands and Rivers, for even as allsoe in the Mountains that are not subjected and in woods and open sea.

14. That every one shall bee, for the time of Seaven yeares, free from all taxes, and customes, and duties, or anny other charges that cann bee named, hee that shall make a Plantation of Sugar with 50 negroes shall enjoy 12 years of the same Libertie, hee that shall make a Plantation of Oxen, with 30 negroes, 9 yeares, and if it be less—accordingly, butt

after the said time thei shall Pay the tenth part of thei fruttes.

15. Each one shall injoy for the time of five years the same Liberties of the Mines of Gould and Silver and Precious Stones, allsoe of the fishing of perles and Corall, butt after the 3rd yeares—thei shall Pay the fift Parte of what thei shall gett, or the Pallen of it, at allsoe it shall bee Lawfull to Trade with the Indians.

16. That each one may freely goe with anny ships as well Their owne as fraighted from those Parts with sutch goods as thei shall thinke good, as allsoe to the Cust of Guiny to Transport negroes to the said Coste, and transport them where thei shall think fit.

17. That each one shall be provided of the warehouse (which shall bee lett at the said Cust) in the first six months of all Provisions, Clothes and instruments for their lands, at a Racsonable Ratte and thei shall make the Paiment of the first fruttes of the Coutri.—

18. Allso, it is Granted to anny Person to have there in their service all kinds of shipping which thei shall neede.

A Rulle In What Manner and Condition That the Negroes Shall Bee Delivered in the Wilde Cust.

1. That there shall bee delivered in the said Cust soe many negroes as each one shall have occasion for, The which shall bee Paide heere shewing the Receipt, in ready money at one hundred and fifty guilders for each man or whoman.

2. Children from eight to twelve years thei shall counte two for one piece, under the eight yeares three for one the breeding goeth with the mothers.

3. hee that shall advance the Paiment beefore the Receipt comes shall enjoy the discounnte of Tenn £Cent.

4. To all them that shall Paye and buy for Ready mony if thei will thei shall have sutch number of negroes. Trusted to Pay within five years and after them shall Pay for each

man, whoman or child as above the sume of two hundred and fifty and he that shall advance the Paiment shall have discount of Tean Per Cent a yeare and them that shall buy for ready money shall bee ingaged for the Paiment of the others.”

Now, to what order of events does this important document belong? The British Museum cataloguer has suggested an emendation of the title, so as to make it read, “Privileges granted to the people of the Hebrew nation that are to go (from Holland?) to the Wilde Coast (of Brazil?)” He has also suggested, in the absence of a date, that it belongs to “late XVII. cent.” Two at least of these suggestions, I am afraid, will not stand a careful examination. The idea that these privileges were intended for Jews going to Brazil is, indeed, negatived by the document itself, inasmuch as it says (Article 9) that the people to whom it was granted should be exempt from prosecution for debts incurred in Brazil. From this, too, I think it is obvious that the recipients of these privileges were fugitives from Brazil, and as the volume in which the document appears, is chronologically arranged, and it is placed between a letter dated 1648, and a pamphlet dated 1653, I think we have strong presumptive evidence for associating it with the events of 1654, when the Portuguese drove the Jews out of Pernambuco. These then are privileges granted to Jews expelled from Brazil and who were anxious to settle on the Wild Coast. Where was the Wild Coast? Any one who has had to do lately with the Venezuelan Boundary question and has been compelled, as I have been, to study the early documents and maps relating to the colonization of Guiana, will have no difficulty in answering this question. The whole of the coast line of Guiana was called the Wild Coast by the early English navigators; but, after 1650, when Surinam was conquered, the name was specially used in England in connection with that colony. The conclusion then at which I arrive—somewhat tentatively, I own—is

that these privileges were granted by the Commonwealth to the Brazilian Jews who settled in Surinam in 1654.

I do not, of course, ignore that there is an alternative theory. It is just possible that the document I have read is a memorandum of privileges granted by the Dutch themselves to refugees from Pernambuco, who were willing to settle on other points of the Guiana coast under the Netherlands flag, and that it had been communicated to the English Committee of Trade and Plantations merely for their information. In that event, however, I think we should have heard of these privileges before, especially as the history of the Jewish settlements in Dutch America has been very voluminously and minutely recorded. The Dutch references in the document which would seem to support this latter theory may be accounted for in another way. Cromwell took a deep personal interest in Dormido's mission to England, and he manifested his sympathy for the Jews expelled from Pernambuco by writing personally to the King of Portugal on behalf of Dormido's sons. Now it is exceedingly likely that negotiations took place between the protector and the Dutch merchant, for the settlement of the Pernambuco refugees in Surinam, and that with that object Dormido was invited to draft the charter to be granted to his Surinam co-religionists. In that event we can easily understand the references to the privileges of the Jews of Amsterdam and of the Zeelanders already settled on the Guiana coast as affording a model for the concessions to be granted to the Jews settling in the British Colony.

I am further supported in my view that these were Surinam privileges by the fact that when, after the restoration, another Charter of Privileges was presented to the Jews of Surinam, it embodied all the points referred to in the document under discussion. You will, perhaps, ask me how it is that these important privileges have been forgotten, and that even in Surinam itself their memory has not been preserved. For the same reason, I answer, that until a few

years ago the majority of historical students imagined that the Jews in England received no privileges until Charles II. came to the throne. When the Commonwealth was swept away, it was dangerous for anybody to admit that he had been favored by the Lord Protector and his Government, and consequently every one hastened to obtain fresh privileges from the monarchy. Thus for many years the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation in Bevis Marks had a special ritual for the commemoration of the re-admission of the Jews under Charles II. In the same way, the Jews of Surinam were doubtless induced to date their history from the privileges granted them by the British Monarchical Government in 1665, rather than from the Charter they had received from the usurper eleven years before.

In any case this is a document of the very first importance to Jewish history. If my theory be correct it marks the first attempt at complete emancipation known to Anglo-Jewish history, for it was not until the following year that Jews settled in Roger Williams' colony and benefited by its undiscriminating laws. If, on the other hand, it be a Dutch grant, its importance is not thereby impaired—it is only transferred from us and the Americans to the Dutch and the Americans. It is, however, to be remembered, that even without it the honor of first practicing Jewish emancipation belongs to British America, for the Surinam privileges of 1665 were quite as sweeping as those of 1654, and the first Jewish Naturalization Act passed by the Imperial Government applied only to Jews settled in the American and West Indian Colonies. How this legislation re-acted on the Emancipation struggle at home is "another story" which I hope to tell on some future occasion.

APPENDIX II.

MORDECAI M. NOAH'S ARARAT PROJECT.

A very interesting and detailed account of the "Founding of the City of Ararat, on Grand Island, by Mordecai M.

Noah" was contained in a paper read before the Buffalo Historical Society by the Hon. Lewis F. Allen, in 1866, and printed in Volume I of that Society's *Publications* (pp. 305-328). We quote the following account from that paper: (p. 310) "In this year (1825) an eventful history was about to open on the Niagara frontier. Those members of our Society who then lived here, in the relation of their reminiscences of that period, have been prone to mark it as an eventful year in three thrilling incidents relating to the history of Buffalo, viz.: The visit of General La Fayette, the completion and opening of the Erie Canal, and the hanging of the three Thayers. There might have been added to it another memorable occurrence, not only to Buffalo, but to the Niagara frontier. Following the survey of Grand Island into farm lots for settlement, of which the State authorities gave notice in the public newspapers, an idea occurred to the late Mordecai Manuel Noah, a distinguished Israelite of the City of New York, then editor of a prominent political journal, called *The National Advocate*, that Grand Island would make a suitable asylum for the Jews of all nations, whereon they could establish a great city and become emancipated from the oppression bearing so heavily upon them in foreign countries.

To understand this matter thoroughly, it is necessary to go somewhat into particulars. I knew Major Noah well. Physically, he was a man of large muscular frame, rotund person, a benignant face and a most portly bearing. Although a native of the United States, the lineaments of his race were impressed upon his features with unmistakable character, and if the blood of the elder Patriarchs or David or Solomon flowed not in his veins, then both chronology and genealogy must be at fault. He was a Jew, thorough and accomplished. His manners were genial, his heart kind and his generous sympathies embraced all Israel, even to the end of the earth. He was learned, too, not only in the Jewish and civil law, but in the ways of the world at large, and particu-

larly in the faith and politics of "Saint Tammany" and "The Bucktail Party" of the State, of which his newspaper was the organ and chief expounder in the City of New York. He was a Counselor at Law in our courts, had been Consul General for the United States at the Kingdom of Tunis on the coast of Barbary—at the time he held it, a most responsible trust.

Although a visionary—as some would call him—and an enthusiast in his enterprises, he had won many friends among the Gentiles, who had adopted him into their political associations. He had warm attachments and few hates, and if the sharpness of his political attacks created, for the time, a personal rancor in the breasts of his opponents, his genial, frank, childlike ingenuousness healed it all at the first opportunity. He was a pundit in Hebrew law, traditions and customs. "To the manner born," he was loyal to his religion; and no argument or sophistry could swerve him from his fidelity, or uproot his hereditary faith. My friend and neighbor, William A. Bird, Esq., has related to me the following anecdote: Many years ago, when his mother, the late Mrs. Eunice Porter Bird Pawling, resided at Troy, New York, a society was formed, auxiliary to one organized in the City of New York, for the purpose of christianizing the Jews in all parts of the world. Mrs. Pawling, an energetic doer of good works, in the then infant city of her residence, was applied to for her co-operation in that novel benefaction. She had her own doubts, both of its utility and success, of which results have proved the correctness. But, determined to act understandingly, she wrote a letter to Major Noah, asking his views on so important a subject. He replied in a letter, elaborately setting forth the principles, the faith, and the policy of the Jewish people, their ancient, hereditary traditions, their venerable history, their hope of a coming Messiah, and concluded by expressing the probability that the modern Gentiles would sooner be converted to the Jewish faith, than that the Jews would be converted to theirs.

Major Noah—as I observed, a visionary, somewhat, and an enthusiast altogether—made two grand mistakes in his plan. In the first place, he had no power or authority over his people, and, in the next, he was utterly mistaken in their aptitude for the new calling he proposed them to fulfill. But he went on. He induced his friend, the late Samuel Leggett, of New York, to make a purchase of twenty-five hundred and fifty-five acres, partly at the head of Grand Island, and partly at its center, opposite Tonawanda, at the entrance of the Erie canal into the Niagara river. Either or both those localities were favorable for building a city. These two tracts he thought sufficient for a settlement of his Jewish brethren; which, if successful, would result in all the lands of the island falling into their hands. Nor on a fairly supposititious ground—presuming the Jews, in business affairs, to be like the Gentiles—were his theories so much mistaken. The canal, opening a new avenue to the great western world, from Lake Erie to the ultima-thule of civilization at that day, was about to be completed. The Lakes had no extensive commerce. Capital was unknown as a commercial power in Western New York. The Jews had untold wealth, ready to be converted into active and profitable investment. Tonawanda, in common with Black Rock and Buffalo, with a perfect and capacious natural harbor, was one of the western termini of the Erie canal, and at the foot of the commerce of the western lakes. With sufficient steam power every sail craft and steamboat on the lakes could reach Grand Island and Tonawanda, discharge into, and take on, their cargoes from canal boats and by their ample means thus command the western trade. Buffalo and Black Rock, although up to that time the chief recipients of the lake commerce, lacking moneyed capital, would not be able to compete with the energy and abundant resources of the proposed commercial cities to be established on Grand Island and Tonawanda, and they must yield to the rivalry of the Jews. Such was Major Noah's theory and such his plans. Mr. Leggett's co-

operation, with abundant means for the land purchase, he had already secured. Through the columns of his own widely circulating *National Advocate* he promulgated his plan, and by the time the sale of the Grand Island lots was to be made at the State Land Office in Albany, other parties of capitalists had concluded to take a venture in the speculation.

The sale took place. Mr. Leggett purchased one thousand and twenty acres at the head of the island, at the cost of seven thousand, two hundred dollars, and fifteen hundred and thirty-five acres along the river in a compact body above, opposite and below Tonawanda, at the price of nine thousand, seven hundred and eighty-five dollars; being about fifty per cent. above the average of what the whole body of land sold at per acre—that is to say: The whole seventeen thousand, three hundred and eighty-one acres sold for seventy-six thousand, two hundred and thirty dollars, being an average, including Mr. Leggett's purchase, of about four dollars and thirty-eight cents per acre.

Next to Leggett, Messrs. John B. Yates and Archibald McIntyre, then proprietors, by purchase from the State, of the vast system of lotteries, embracing those for the benefit of Union college, and other eleemosynary purposes—gambling in lotteries for the benefit of colleges and churches was thought to be a moral instrument in those days—purchased through other parties a large amount of the land, and Peter Smith, of Peterboro (living, however, at Schenectady)—and the most extensive land speculator in the State, father of the present Gerrit Smith—took a large share of the remainder. To sum up, briefly, the result of the sale of Grand Island lands, Leggett and Yates and McIntyre complied with the stipulated terms of the sale, paid over to the State their one-eighth of the purchase money, and gave their bonds for the remainder; while Smith—wary in land-purchasing practice when the State of New York was the seller—did no such thing. He paid his one-eighth of the purchase money down, as did the others, but neglected to give his bond for payment

of the balance. The consequence was, when the eclat of Noah's Ararat subsided, and his scheme proved a failure, the land went down in value, and Smith forfeited his first payment, and the lots fell back to the State. But on a lower re-appraisal by the State some years afterwards, Smith again bought at less than one-half the price at which he originally purchased, made his one-eighth payment again and gave his bond as required; thus pocketing, by his future sale of the property, over twenty thousand dollars in the transaction.

All this, however, aside from Mr. Leggett's purchase for the benefit of Major Noah, has nothing to do with our main history, and is only given as an occurrence of the times.

Major Noah, now secure in the possession of a nucleus for his coveted "City of Refuge for the Jews," addressed himself to its foundation and dedication. He had heralded his intentions through the columns of his *National Advocate*. His cotemporaries of the press ridiculed his scheme, and predicted its failure; yet true to his original purpose, he determined to carry it through. Wise Jews around him shook their heads in doubt of his ability to effect his plans, and withheld from him their support. But, nothing daunted, he ventured it unaided, and almost alone. By the aid of an indomitable friend, and equally enthusiastic co-laborer, Mr. A. B. Seixas, of New York, he made due preparations, and late in the month of August, in the year 1825, with robes of office and insignia of rank securely packed, they left the city of New York for Buffalo. He was a stranger in our then little village of twenty-five hundred people, and could rely for countenance and aid only on his old friend, the late Isaac S. Smith, then residing here, whom he had known abroad while in his consulate at Tunis. In Mr. Smith, however, he found a ready assistant in his plans. Major Noah, with his friend Seixas, arrived in Buffalo in the last days of August. He had got prepared a stone, which was to be "the chief of the corner," with proper inscription, and of ample dimensions for the occasion. This stone was

obtained from the Cleveland, Ohio, sandstone quarries. The inscription, written by Major Noah, was cut by the late Seth Chapin of Buffalo.

As on examination when arriving here, he could not well get to Grand Island to locate and establish his city, it was concluded to lay the corner-stone in the Episcopal church of the village, then under the rectorship of Rev. Addison Searle. As this strange and remarkable proceeding, and the novel act of laying a foundation for a Jewish city, with its imposing rites and formula, its regal pomp and Jewish ceremony in a Christian Episcopal church, with the aid of its authorized rector, may strike the present generation with surprise, a word or two may be said of the transaction.

The Rev. Mr. Searle was, at that time, the officiating clergyman in the little church of St. Paul's, in the village of Buffalo, and had been placed there as a missionary by the late wise and excellent Bishop Hobart. He held a government commission as chaplain of the United States, and had been granted some years' furlough from active duty. He had been on foreign cruises,—had coasted the Mediterranean and spent months in the chief cities of its classic shores, and visited the beautiful Greek Island of Scio, a few weeks after the burning of its towns and the massacre of its people by the Turks, in 1822. He was an accomplished and genial man, of commanding person, and portly mien; his manners were bland and his address courtly. Whether he had made the acquaintance of Major Noah abroad or in New York, or whether he first met him on this occasion at Buffalo, I know not, but their intercourse here was cordial and friendly.

On the second day of September, 1825, the imposing ceremony of laying the corner-stone of the city of Ararat, to be built on Grand Island, took place, and as a full account of the doings of the day, written by Major Noah himself, was published at the time in the *Buffalo Patriot Extra*, I take the liberty of repeating them from that paper:

“It was known, at the sale of that beautiful and valuable

tract called Grand Island, a few miles below this port, in the Niagara river, that it was purchased, in part, by the friends of Major Noah, of New York, avowedly to offer it as an asylum for his brethren of the Jewish persuasion, who, in the other parts of the world, are much oppressed, and it was likewise known that it was intended to erect upon the island a city called Ararat. We are gratified to perceive, by the documents in this day's *Extra* that, coupled with this colonization is a Declaration of Independence and the revival of the Jewish government under the protection of the United States—after the dispersion of that ancient and wealthy people for nearly two thousand years—and the appointment of Mr. Noah as first judge. It was intended, pursuant to the public notice, to celebrate the event on the island, and a flagstaff was erected for the Grand Standard of Israel, and other arrangements made ; but it was discovered that a sufficient number of boats could not be procured in time to convey all those to the island who were desirous of witnessing the ceremony, and the celebration took place this day in the village, which was both interesting and impressive. At dawn of day a salute was fired in front of the Court House, and from the terrace facing the lake. At ten o'clock the masonic and military companies assembled in front of the Lodge, and at eleven, the line of procession was formed as follows :

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

Grand Marshal, Col. Potter, on horseback.

Music.

Military.

Citizens.

Civil Officers.

State Officers in Uniform.

President and Trustees of the Corporation.

Tyler.

Stewards.

Entered Apprentices.

Fellow Crafts.

Master Masons.

Senior and Junior Deacons.

Secretary and Treasurer.

Senior and Junior Wardens.

Master of Lodges.

Past Masters.

Rev. Clergy.

Stewards, with corn, wine and oil.

Globe		Principal Architect, with square, level and plumb.		Globe
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Bible.

Square and Compass, borne by a Master Mason.

The Judge of Israel

In black, wearing the judicial robes of crimson silk, trimmed with ermine, and a richly embossed golden medal suspended from the neck.

A Master Mason.

Royal Arch Masons.

Knights Templar.

On arriving at the church door, the troops opened to the right and left and the procession entered the aisles, the band playing the Grand March from Judas Maccabeus. The full-toned organ commenced its swelling notes, performing the Jubilate. On the communion-table lay the corner-stone, with the following inscription (the Hebrew is from Deut., vi, 4):

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד

ARARAT,

A City of Refuge for the Jews,

Founded by Mordecai Manuel Noah, in the month Tizri Sept. 1825, in the 50th year of American Independence.

“On the stone lay the silver cups with wine, corn and oil.

“The ceremonies commenced by the Morning Service,

read emphatically by the Rev. Mr. Searle of the Episcopal church. 'Before Jehovah's awful Throne,' was sung by the choir to the tune of Old Hundred.—Morning Prayer.—First lesson from Jeremiah, xxxi.—Second Lesson, Zeph. iii. 8. Psalms for the occasion, xcvi., xcvi., xcix., c.; Ps. cxxvii. in verse.—Ante Communion Service.—Psalm in Hebrew.—Benediction.

"Mr. Noah rose and pronounced a discourse, or rather delivered a speech, announcing the re-organization of the Jewish government, and going through a detail of many points of intense interest, to which a crowded auditory listened with profound attention. At the conclusion of the ceremonies the procession returned to the Lodge, and the Masonic brethren and the military repaired to the Eagle Tavern and partook of refreshments. The church was filled with ladies, and the whole ceremony was impressive and unique. A grand salute of twenty-four guns was fired by the artillery, and the band played a number of patriotic airs.

"We learn that a vast concourse assembled at Tonawanda, expecting that the ceremonies would be at Grand Island. Many of them came up in carriages in time to hear the Inaugural speech. The following is the Proclamation, which will be read with great attention and interest. A finer day and more general satisfaction has not been known on any similar occasion.

PROCLAMATION TO THE JEWS.

"WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to manifest to his chosen people the approach of that period, when, in fulfillment of the promises made to the race of Jacob, and as a reward for their pious constancy and triumphant fidelity, they are to be gathered from the four quarters of the globe, and to resume their rank and character among the governments of the earth ;

"AND WHEREAS, the peace which now prevails among civilized nations, the progress of learning throughout the world, and the general spirit of liberality and toleration

which exists together with other changes favorable to light and to liberty, mark in an especial manner the approach of that time, when 'peace on earth and good will to man' are to prevail with a benign and extended influence, and the ancient people of God, the first to proclaim His unity and omnipotence, are to be restored to their inheritance, and enjoy the rights of a sovereign independent people ;

"Therefore, I, Mordecai Manuel Noah, citizen of the United States of America, late Consul of said States to the City and Kingdom of Tunis, High Sheriff of New York, Counselor at Law, and by the grace of God, Governor and Judge of Israel, have issued this my Proclamation, announcing to the Jews throughout the world, that an asylum is prepared and hereby offered to them, where they can enjoy that peace, comfort and happiness which have been denied them through the intolerance and misgovernment of former ages ; an asylum in a free and powerful country, where ample protection is secured to their persons, their property and religious rights ; an asylum in a country remarkable for its vast resources, the richness of its soil, and the salubrity of its climate ; where industry is encouraged, education promoted, and good faith rewarded ; 'a land of milk and honey,' where Israel may repose in peace, under his 'vine and fig tree,' and where our people may so familiarize themselves with the science of government and the lights of learning and civilization, as may qualify them for that great and final restoration to their ancient heritage, which the times so powerfully indicate.

"The asylum referred to is in the State of New York, the greatest State in the American confederacy. New York contains forty-three thousand, two hundred and fourteen square miles, divided into fifty-five counties, and having six thousand and eighty-seven post-towns and cities, containing one million, five hundred thousand inhabitants, together with six million acres of cultivated land, improvements in agriculture and manufactures, in trade and commerce, which include a valuation of three hundred millions of dollars of taxable

property; one hundred and fifty thousand militia, armed and equipped; a constitution founded upon an equality of rights, having no test-oaths, and recognizing no religious distinctions, and seven thousand free schools and colleges, affording the blessings of education to four hundred thousand children. Such is the great and increasing State to which the emigration of the Jews is directed.

“The desired spot in the State of New York, to which I hereby invite my beloved people throughout the world, in common with those of every religious denomination, is called Grand Island, and on which I shall lay the foundation of a City of Refuge, to be called Ararat.

“Grand Island in the Niagara river is bounded by Ontario on the north, and Erie on the south, and within a few miles of each of those great commercial lakes. The island is nearly twelve miles in length, and varying from three to seven miles in breadth, and contains upwards of seventeen thousand acres of remarkably rich and fertile land. Lake Erie is about two hundred and seventy miles in length, and borders on the States of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio; and westwardly, by the possessions of our friends and neighbors, the British subjects of Upper Canada. This splendid lake unites itself by means of navigable rivers, with Lakes St. Clair, Huron, Michigan and Superior, embracing a lake shore of nearly three thousand miles; and by short canals those vast sheets of water will be connected with the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, thereby establishing a great and valuable internal trade to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. Lake Ontario, on the north, is one hundred and ninety miles in length, and empties into the St. Lawrence, which, passing through the Province of Lower Canada, carries the commerce of Quebec and Montreal to the Atlantic Ocean.

“Thus fortified to the right and left by the extensive commercial resources of the Great Lakes and their tributary streams, within four miles of the sublime Falls of Niagara, affording the greatest water-power in the world for manu-

facturing purposes,—directly opposite the mouth of the Grand Canal of three hundred and sixty miles inland navigation to the Hudson river and city of New York,—having the fur trade of Upper Canada to the west, and also of the great territories towards the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean ; likewise the trade of the Western States of America, —Grand Island may be considered as surrounded by every commercial, manufacturing and agricultural advantage, and from its location is pre-eminently calculated to become, in time, the greatest trading and commercial depot in the new and better world. To men of worth and industry it has every substantial attraction ; the capitalist will be enabled to enjoy his resources with undoubted profit, and the merchant cannot fail to reap the reward of enterprise in a great and growing republic ; but to the industrious mechanic, manufacturer and agriculturist it holds forth great and improving advantages.

“Deprived, as our people have been for centuries of a right in the soil, they will learn, with peculiar satisfaction, that here they can till the soil, reap the harvest, and raise the flocks which are unquestionably their own ; and, in the full and unmolested enjoyment of their religious rights, and of every civil immunity, together with peace and plenty, they can lift up their voice in gratitude to Him who sustained our fathers in the wilderness, and brought us in triumph out of the land of Egypt ; who assigned to us the safe-keeping of his oracles, who proclaimed us his people, and who has ever walked before us like a ‘cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.’

“In His name do I revive, renew and re-establish the government of the Jewish Nation, under the auspices and protection of the constitution and laws of the United States of America ; confirming and perpetuating all our rights and privileges,—our name, our rank, and our power among the nations of the earth,—as they existed and were recognized under the government of the Judges. And I hereby enjoin

it upon all our pious and venerable Rabbis, our Presidents and Elders of Synagogues, Chiefs of Colleges and brethren in authority throughout the world, to circulate and make known this, my Proclamation, and give to it full publicity, credence and effect.

"It is my will that a census of the Jews throughout the world be taken, and returns of persons, together with their age and occupations be registered in the archives of the Synagogues where they are accustomed to worship, designating such, in particular, as have been and are distinguished in the useful arts, in science or in knowledge.

"Those of our people who, from age, local attachment, or from any other cause, prefer remaining in the several parts of the world which they now respectively inhabit, and who are treated with liberality by the public authorities, are permitted to do so, and are specially recommended to be faithful to the governments which protect them. It is, however, expected that they will aid and encourage the emigration of the young and enterprising, and endeavor to send to this country such as will add to our national strength and character, by their industry, honor and patriotism.

"Those Jews who are in the military employment of the different sovereigns of Europe are enjoined to keep in their ranks until further orders, and conduct themselves with bravery and fidelity.

"I command that a strict neutrality be observed in the pending wars between the Greeks and the Turks, enjoined by considerations of safety towards a numerous population of Jews now under the oppressive dominion of the Ottoman Porte.

"The annual gifts which, for many centuries, have been afforded to our pious brethren in our holy City of Jerusalem (to which may God speedily restore us) are to continue with unabated liberality; our seminaries of learning and institutions of charity in every part of the world are to be increased, in order that wisdom and virtue may permanently prevail among the chosen people.

“I abolish forever polygamy among the Jews, which, without religious warrant, still exists in Asia and Africa. I prohibit marriages or giving Keduchin without both parties are of a suitable age, and can read and write the language of the country which they respectively inhabit, and which I trust will ensure for their offspring the blessings of education and probably, the lights of science.

“Prayers shall forever be said in the Hebrew language, but it is recommended that occasional discourses on the principles of the Jewish faith and the doctrines of morality generally, be delivered in the language of the country ; together with such reforms, which, without departing from the ancient faith, may add greater solemnity to our worship.

“The Caraites and Samaritan Jews, together with the black Jews of India and Africa, and likewise those in Cochin China, and the sect on the coast of Malabar, are entitled to an equality of rights and religious privileges, as are all who may partake of the great covenant and obey and respect the Mosaic laws.

“The Indians of the American continent, in their admitted Asiatic origin,—in their worship of God,—in their dialect and language,—in their sacrifices, marriages, divorces, burials, fastings, purifications, punishments, cities of refuge, divisions of tribes,—in their High Priests,—in their wars and in their victories, being in all probability, the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, which were carried captive by the King of Assyria, measures will be adopted to make them sensible of their condition and finally re-unite them with their brethren, the chosen people.

“A capitation tax of three shekels in silver, per annum, or one Spanish dollar, is hereby levied upon each Jew throughout the world, to be collected by the Treasurer of the different congregations, for the purpose of defraying the various expenses of re-organizing the government, of aiding emigrants in the purchase of agricultural implements, providing for their immediate wants and comforts, and assisting

their families in making their first settlements, together with such free-will offerings as may be generously made in the furtherance of the laudable objects connected with the restoration of the people and the glory of the Jewish nation. A Judge of Israel shall be chosen once in every four years by the Consistory at Paris, at which time proxies from every congregation shall be received.

"I do hereby name as Commissioners, the most learned and pious Abraham de Cologna, Knight of the Iron Crown of Lombardy, Grand Rabbi of the Jews and President of the Consistory at Paris; likewise the Grand Rabbi Andrade of Bordeaux; and also our learned and esteemed Grand Rabbis of the German and Portugal Jews, in London, Rabbis Herschell and Meldola; together with the Honorable Aaron Nunez Cordoza, of Gibraltar, Abraham Busnac, of Leghorn, Benjamin Gradis, of Bordeaux; Dr. E. Gans and Professor Zunz, of Berlin, and Dr. Leo Woolf of Hamburg to aid and assist in carrying into effect the provisions of this my proclamation, with powers to appoint the necessary agents in the several parts of the world, and to establish emigration societies, in order that the Jews may be concentrated and capacitated to act as a distinct body, having at the head of each kingdom or republic such presiding officers as I shall upon their recommendation appoint. Instructions to these my commissioners, shall be forthwith transmitted; and a more enlarged and general view of plan, motives and objects will be detailed in the address to the nation. The Consistory at Paris is hereby authorized and empowered to name three discreet persons of competent abilities, to visit the United States, and make such reports to the nation as the actual condition of this country shall warrant.

"I do appoint Roshhodesh Adar, February 7th, 1826, to be observed with suitable demonstrations as a day of Thanksgiving to the Lord God of Israel for the manifold blessings and signal protection which he has deigned to extend to his people, and in order that, on that great occasion, our prayers

may be offered for the continuance of His divine mercy and the fulfillment of all the promises and pledges made to the race of Jacob.

“I recommend peace and union among us; charity and good-will to all; toleration and liberality to our brethren of every religious denomination, enjoined by the mild and just precepts of our holy religion; honor and good faith in the fulfillment of all our contracts, together with temperance, economy, and industry in our habits.

“I humbly entreat to be remembered in your prayers; and lastly and most earnestly I do enjoin you to ‘keep the charge of the Holy God,’ to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes and His commandments, and His judgments and His testimonies, as it is written in the laws of Moses—‘that thou mayest prosper in all thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.’

“Given at Buffalo, in the State of New York, this second day Tishri, in the year of the world 5586, corresponding with the fifteenth day of September, 1825, and in the fiftieth year of American independence.

“By the Judge,

“A. B. SEIXAS,

“Secretary Pro tem.”

The day succeeding the ceremonies—the “corn and wine and oil,” and “the Proclamation”—the newly constituted Judge in Israel issued another address (also printed in the *Buffalo Patriot Extra*), setting forth the design of the new city, and invoking the aid and countenance of his brethren abroad, in contributing of their substance and influence to its uprising and population. Thus, with due benediction, ended the ceremonial—the first of its kind known in this country—of the corner-stone of an anticipated Hebrew, or any other city, being laid on the communion table of a Christian church!

The ceremonial, with its procession, “Masonic and military,” its pomp and magnificence, passed away. Major Noah,

a day or two afterwards, departed for his home in New York; the "corner-stone" was taken from the audience-chamber of the church, and deposited against its rear wall, outside; and the great prospective City of Ararat, with its splendid predictions and promises, vanished, "and, like an unsubstantial pageant faded—left not a rock behind."

This was, in fact, the whole affair. The foreign Rabbis denounced Noah and his entire scheme. He had levied taxes of sundry "shekels" on all the Jewish tribes of the world, assumed supreme jurisdiction over their emigration to America, and sought to control their destinies afterwards. But, having no confidence in his plans or financial management, the American Jews even, repudiated his proceedings; and, after a storm of ridicule heaped on his presumptuous head, the whole thing died away and passed among the other thousand-and-one absurdities of other character which had preceded it. Noah, however, with his ever-ready wit, and newspaper at hand, replied to all the jeers and flings in good humor, and lost none of the prestige of his character and position, either politically or morally. He was known to be eccentric in many things, and this was put down as the climax of his eccentricities. Poor in money always, he had no influence in financial circles, yet he was a "power" in the State. Some years after his Ararat affair, he held the office of Judge in one of the criminal city courts of New York, with decided acceptance to the public—married a wealthy Jewess of high respectability—reared a family, and died some ten or a dozen years ago in New York, lamented by those who best knew him, as a kind and generous man.

The subsequent history of the corner-stone which we have described, is imperfectly known. It is generally supposed, by those who have heard of the matter at all, that Ararat was actually founded on Grand Island, opposite Tonawanda; and some thirty years ago, accounts were frequently published by tourists and in the newspapers, that the stone aforesaid stood, encased in a monument, on the actual spot selected by

Noah for the building of his city. That the stone did so stand in a brick monument at Grand Island, opposite Tonawanda, but not on the site of any city, past or present, is a fact, and it came about in this wise: In the summer of the year 1827, having become a resident of Buffalo in April of that year, I saw the stone leaning against the rear underpinning of the little church of St. Paul, next to Pearl street. It had stood there from the time it was removed at its consecration in 1825. When it was removed from the wall of the church I cannot say. In the year 1833, I made a purchase of Messrs. Samuel Leggett, of New York, Yates and McIntyre, of Albany, and Peter Smith, of Schenectady, and a few other parties, on behalf of a company of gentlemen in Boston, Massachusetts, with whom I had an interest, of the lands they held on Grand Island, amounting in all to about sixteen thousand acres. The average price paid for it was a little more than five dollars per acre. The principal object of the purchase was the valuable white-oak ship-timber abounding there, which it was intended to cut and convey to the Boston ship-yards.

A clearing and settlement was made on the island, opposite Tonawanda. Several houses were built, and a steam-mill for sawing the timber into planks, erected. A few months after the purchase, in the year 1834, being one day at the house of General Peter B. Porter, at Black Rock, I saw Major Noah's corner-stone lying in his lawn near the river front of his dwelling. In answer to my question, how it came there, he said, that being in New York some few years previous, and meeting Major Noah, with whom he had been long acquainted, he told him that his corner-stone of Ararat was standing behind St. Paul's church in Buffalo. Noah then requested him to take care of it, and place it in some secure spot, as he wished to have it preserved where it would not excite comment, for he had heard quite enough about it. In compliance with the request, General Porter took the stone, and placed it in his own grounds. Taking a fancy to

the stone, I asked General Porter to give it to me, assuring him that I would take it to Grand Island, and give it an honorable position. He complied with my request, and I removed it to the new settlement on the island. A decent architectural structure of brick was erected, standing about fourteen feet high and six feet square. A niche was made in the front, facing the river, in which the stone was placed, and a comely roof as a top finish, put over it. A steam passenger-boat was running for several years, daily, through the summer, between Buffalo and the Falls of Niagara, touching each way at Whitehaven, the little Grand Island settlement, and many people went to shore to see the monument, which told a false history. Artists and tourists sketched the homely little structure, and copied the inscription on the stone, and the next year a "Guide Book to the Falls of Niagara," issued in Buffalo, by a young man named Ferris, I believe, had the monument, with the "Corner-stone of the Jewish City of Ararat" well engraved and described, conspicuous in its pages. That, of course, was sufficient authority for the general belief that the City of Ararat was founded on that spot by Mordecai Manuel Noah.

The mill was taken down about the year 1850, and the monument becoming time-worn and dilapidated, was taken down also. We had no historical society in Buffalo then, and although the stone was my property, I had become careless of its possession, and soon afterwards Mr. Wallace Baxter, who owned a farm a couple of miles above Whitehaven, on the river shore, took the stone and carried it to his place. By this removal, the farm of Mr. Baxter—taking the stone as authority—became as much the site of Ararat as Whitehaven had been. In the year 1864, the late Mr. Charles H. Waite, of this city, opened a watering place—"Sheenwater"—on the opposite, or Canadian side of the island, and Mr. Baxter carried the stone over there for the delectation of the visitors who congregated to that resort, thus establishing another locality of the renowned Ararat.

Mr. Waite's house having burned a few months after the stone was removed there, he carefully placed it in an out-house on the premises, where it remained until the last summer, when I obtained his leave to take it again in my possession, which I did and deposited it on my farm at the head of Grand Island, one of the original tracts of land which Mr. Leggett had purchased for Major Noah. There, too, had the traveling public seen it, might have been located another site for the Hebrew city. A short time afterwards I had the corner stone taken to my premises on Niagara street, in this city; the same to which General Porter, then owning them, had removed it, previous to the year 1834. A few weeks later it was again—and, I trust, finally—removed, and on the second day of January, in the year 1866, deposited in the official room of the Buffalo Historical Society, where it is duly honored with a conspicuous position against its eastern wall, leaving the Hebrew "City of Ararat" a myth—never having existence, save in the prurient imagination of its projector, a record of which the tablet bears.

Like the dove which went out from the ark of his great patriarchal progenitor, the stone of the later Noah has come back to its domicile, not in the ark, but to the city which in its embryo existence, first gave it shelter and protection, and, we trust,—unlike the dove,—to again go out no more. Just forty years from its exodus from the communion-table of the church of St. Paul, like the children of ancient Israel, has this eventful stone—meantime crossing, not the parted waters of the Red Sea, but the transparent waters of the Niagara, resting by the wayside, and traveling through the wilderness in circuitous wanderings—found its home in the rooms of the Buffalo Historical Society.

Thus ends the strange, eventful history of Major Noah, his Hebrew city and its corner-stone. Although that portion of the public, away from Buffalo, who ever heard anything of this modern Ararat, have believed, since the

year 1825, that Major Noah actually purchased Grand Island, and founded his city, and laid his corner-stone upon it, the fact is, that he never owned an acre of its land, nor founded the city, nor laid a corner-stone there. Nor have I been able, after diligent inquiry, to ascertain that he ever set foot on the island. I have heard sundry traditions, lately, of his going there at the time he visited Buffalo in the year 1825. All these were contradictory, and partially guess work ; no one, so far as I have ascertained, ever saw him there. Thus, that point may be considered as definitely settled.

EZRA STILES AND THE JEWS.

BY REVEREND W. WILLNER, *Meridian, Miss.*

In tracing the ever-interesting history of the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island, we early come to mention of the Rev. Dr. Ezra Stiles, as one who could give us much information, and who was always friendly disposed to our co-religionists. True, his interest in Judaism probably sprang from the hope of once seeing the whole Chosen People embrace Christianity; yet he was not alone in this regard among the friends of Israel. However, at a time of Christian exclusiveness, as his was, his broad-minded views deserve especial praise. He loved freedom, and rejoiced in the fact that religious intolerance was not known to Roger Williams and his colony. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Cumming of Edinburgh, dated July 26, 1759, he says of Newport: "We are settled, not in toleration, but equal Protestant liberty." Of course, we must not lay too much stress on the word "Protestant." When books of deistic tendency were refused by Yale, Ezra Stiles protested against the narrowness of the authorities. He was a perfect man in his generation.

In 1767, Ezra Stiles began to write his diary; it is the property of each succeeding President of Yale, and will soon be published by the University. This diary (fifteen quarto volumes of about 300 pages each, closely written) must be of interest to us, since it was the diarist's habit to note down carefully every new idea gained, to copy the interesting letters he wrote and received, and to make researches on a great variety of subjects, scientific, mathematical, statistical; it will probably contain much of the correspondence between him and Carigal. Before that time, he wrote his remarks occasionally; and through the kindness of the librarian,

Prof. Dexter, I had access to them, but found them to have been made in 1760–1762, and not later. For other personal information I am indebted to his biography, written by Abiel Holmes, A. M., and printed in Boston, by Andrews, in May, 1798, just three years after Stiles' death.

Biographical Sketch.

Ezra Stiles was born to Rev. Isaac and Keziah (daughter of Rev. Edward Taylor) Stiles, at Worth Haven, Connecticut, Dec. 10, 1727. He entered Yale in 1742, and stayed there after graduation till 1750, when he devoted himself to mission work among the Indians, a work he had to give up on account of ill health. In 1753, he took the attorney's oath, and practiced law till 1755. In April of that year he went to Newport, where he was called to the ministry in May, and installed on the 22 of October. However, he did not forget his Indians, for in 1761 he made inquiries about them, especially about the Pequots. Did he believe them to be the "Ten Lost Tribes?" Very likely, for he always hunted for the "Remnant of Israel." In May, 1775, his wife, Elizabeth Hubbard (of New Haven) died, and in October following, his congregation disbanded owing to the troubled times. In April, 1777, he accepted a pulpit in Portsmouth, but was elected President of Yale College, November 6 of that year. He accepted the high office March 18, 1778, and after settling his affairs and liberating his slave, who had been imported in 1757, went to New Haven, and was inducted into his office July 8. He lectured several times in New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey. In 1784, at the age of 57 years, he began to study French. The inauguration of Washington, which he attended, impressed him very much. He died May 12, 1795.

His Hebrew Studies.

In May, 1767, Dr. Stiles knew ten letters of the Hebrew alphabet; he therefore requested one of his Jewish friends to

teach him the others. Unlike some modern students of that ancient tongue, he determined, before beginning to translate from it into English, to read the language fluently, and henceforth read ten pages of the Psalter every day before breakfast. On the last of January of the next year, he began to translate Genesis, and by May 12 had finished it and Exodus. By the end of the year he had read Ezra and some of the Chaldee in Daniel, reading one chapter of the Bible and a little Arabic daily except Sundays. Thus he finished the Bible in October, 1770. As was most natural, he compared his translation with the authorized version, and found the latter an excellent rendering, requiring corrections in but few places. He now continued his Hebrew studies and became so proficient that in 1773—the year he met Rabbi Hayim Isaac Carigal—he wrote a Hebrew letter of 22 pages on the “Divinity of the Messiah”; in 1774, he read Onkelos and Jonathan in the original, and in 1777, we find him, according to his biographer, reading “Chaldee and Targum with Eben Ezra and Ishaki.” In July 1778, when he was inducted into his office as President of Yale, he delivered a Hebrew oration.*

* This sounds very nice, to be sure, nevertheless we may doubt whether he understood everything he read in his “Ishaki.” A Hebrew prayer-book of the Sephardic rite, printed by Athias, and bearing on page שכה, after the psalm for Pentecost, the note “Legi July 28, 1782, Ezra Stiles,” was presented to Yale College Library by W. Davenport in 1792, and is still there. This prayer-book has some marginal notes, of which I copy the most interesting :

אחז הוא ראה גלגלת אחז is translated : “he saw the first heaven, or Galgol.” בעשרה מאמרות נברא העולם “The world created by God, whose name designated in the ten words.”—קרב לנו קץ הגאולה “the end of exile, or Redemption”; most peculiar of all, however : שליח צבור “Angel of the Chh.”

It must have been his idea that the prayers were written before the Diaspora ; he remarks at the Litany למען אמתך (סליחות), especially at the passages שממות היכלך . . . הרבן ביתך : “Written after Destruction of Temple, unless an after-insertion.” (Interesting

Search for the Ten Lost Tribes.

As has been suggested before in this paper, Dr. Stiles was greatly interested in the search for the "Ten Tribes of Israel," and I find record of the following letters he wrote, none of which seem to have been answered :

Feb. 27, 1767, to J. Z. Holwell, Esq.: "It is said that not only on the Malabar Coast, at Cochin, but at Patna, up the Ganges, there are large bodies of Jews (or Hebrews), and the latter are said to count themselves of the half tribe of Manasseh. Do all Jews of the East appear to be of the last dispersion? or do those of Patna, in particular, discover any evidence of their being descended from the ten tribes? If so, have they the Pentateuch or any other Hebrew writings beyond the age of Shalmaneser? In the region north of the Mogul empire are there found any clusters of people that circumcise and retain traditions of a derivation of the Ten Tribes?"

August 1772, he wrote a Latin letter to Reverend Busch, a Moravian missionary in Astrakhan, enquiring whether he found "any descendants of the Ten Tribes between the Wolga and the Sinesian empire; what is the color of their

is his query: "Why not משיח למהן?") Similarly the Litany רחמנא לן bears the note: "Chaldee, and so inserted under 2d Temple."

He was interested in the "Cabala" as given in the sayings of the Fathers, and at the end of Mishnah, 13, Pereq I, he says: "Hitherto the Cabala is traced from Moses to Hillel, contemp. with J. Christ." Yet was his chronology imperfect, since at II, 9, he says: "Johanan Ben Zaccai received from Hillel and Shamai about A. D. 12"; and at 20, he says: "End of 5 Disciples of Ben Zaccai who were contemporary to Christ."—In the same Pereq, 5, we find a case of mistaken identity, for he remarks: "Hillel A. D., Last of the Family of Hillel the Great, and baptized by a Xtian Bp. Serug: Epiphanius."

That he meant it well with the Jews is shown by the fact that at the passage א"ש תן שלום למלך אדוננו (סליחות) he placed an arrow (⇒); was it to mark the place in discussion with other men, as a proof that the Jews were loyal? על זה לטיב יזכר שמו.

hair and beards? Do they observe circumcision? Do they rest on the Sabbath? Do they speak Hebrew or a dialect of it? What are the names of their heroes, cities, tribes? Have they ancient traditions, the Penteteuch, festivals or prayers that can be termed Jewish? Do they hope to return to the Holy Land? What ceremonies do they observe at marriage? Have they any divorces? Do they observe the new moons? Do they distinguish between clean and unclean animals? Do they intermarry with the other tribes? or have they any remnant of the worship of Jeroboam, do they worship Molech or other idols or images? Do they give oblations? What is their mythology?"

In 1792 he wrote to a certain Bruce: "Have the Jews of Samana any synagogues or places of worship? Do they observe anniversary festivals, such as Sabbath, etc.? What is their liturgy? Have they priests and sacrifices?"

In 1794 he was glad to see in the Notes of Sir William Jones that the Afghans are probably the Ten Tribes.

Statistical Notes.

In the *Book of Miscellaneous Notes* we find many items of interest in various fields; not the least are lists of families and of names of men interested in certain enterprises. In all of these Dr. Stiles marked the denominations, designating Quakers by Q, Episcopalians by PE, Baptists by B, Jews by JE, and Presbyterians by P.

Among the "Names of Redwood Library Comp^a," incorporated August 29, 1747, we find Ab^m. Hart and Moses Lopez.*

In 1755 he wrote to a friend in Birmingham, England, "There are fifteen Jewish families in Newport; they have no minister. New York has many Jews who have Alhazan from Amsterdam."

* Joseph Jacobs, admitted by note of the Company Nov. 4, 1747, is marked "Q." Was he a descendant of Joseph Jacobs mentioned by Kohler? *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 6, p. 67.

In 1760 he found, on inquiry, that there were no Jews in the colony of Connecticut.

"The families of the town of Newport, as near as I can collect for the year 1760, are nearly thus :

41	widows	Presbyt.	both meetings	220	in 2 ^d	40 bachelors
18	do.	Episc.		169		
		Friends		105		
		Baptists	Mr. Upham	25	}	190
			“ Maxim	15		
			“ Thurston	150		
		Jews	about	15	}	30
		Moravians	“	15		
				<hr/>		
				714		

A list of all families in Bristol, written in 1762, contains no Jews.

"List of owners of vessels in Newport in 1762 : *

*130	Mr. Lopez		1 brig

425	" Hart	1 ship	2 brigs
105	" Jacob Isaacs		1 brig
190*	" Elizur	2 sloops	
*80	" Meyers	1 sloop	"

Jan. 6, 1762: "I learn in conversation with Capt. Jno. Nichols that there are no Jews in New Haven. . . . Jan. 27, 1763: Dr. Hubbard of New Haven (his father-in-law) writes me that five Papists, but no Jews live there."

Other Items.

Dr. Stiles' friendship for Carigal is well-known; in July, 1775, the latter was in Barbados, expecting his wife. Dr. Stiles, whose wife had died but two months since, wrote him: "May it be long before you, dear sir, shall be called

* I only give names marked as Jews. The meaning of the numbers and asterisks I do not know.

upon to experience so tender a grief." His biographer tells us that he counted among his friends no less than six rabbis, and in 1774 he held a long discussion with two learned rabbis about the coming of Christ.

That he attended synagogue frequently is likewise known. Interesting is the following description, taken from his diary, of services on Tish'ah Beab, 1773: "The place of the ark was covered with a black curtain, and the lamp was put out. A table, covered with black, stood before the Tabauh; and on a low bench sat the Parnass and the Huzzan. The prayers were exceedingly melancholy, particularly when the Huzzan rose up and went to the place of the Holy of Holies, or the ark and mercy-seat, where he wrapped himself up in the black curtain, and slowly mourned out a most solemn, weeping and doleful lamentation, for the absence of the Debir and the Shekhinah, for the cessation of the oracle, and for the destruction of the holy of holies. The roll of the law was brought out, without any ceremony, covered with black, and read at the foot of the Tabauh; the portion was from Deuteronomy. Then the fourth chapter of Jeremiah was read, and three or four other chapters; then the book of Lamentations; then the beginning and the end of Job."

In the *Book of Miscellaneous Notes*, on page 610, may be read the record of the Superior Court, March term 1762, *in re* Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizur, which need not be copied.* On page 614, we find the following comment:

"Josephus says, 'had all the Happiness that ever Jerusalem enjoyed been equal to the Miseries it suffered in this Siege, it had doubtless been the envy of all the world.'—War of the Jews Abrig^d, 163.

"There are about 15 fam^s of Jews in Newport. Some of the principal of them last year made Application to the Supreme Court (610—S. C. Rh. Jsl. Newport ss. March

* See *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 6, p. 71.

Term 1762) to be naturalized. The Court declined or deferred acting. The Jews then applied to the General Assembly, which referred it to the Sup. Court again as their business to determine, which Sup. Court at Newport March Term 1762 gave their judgment and determination upon the Petition of Aron Lopez & Isaac Elizur, copied two Leaves back. It was remarkable that before this Term there had been three Trials for Felony, of which two were capital, all guilty by Jury. And on the eleventh day of March, 1762, Sentence was pronounced upon the Criminals purposely bro't to the Bar; first upon Jn^o Sherman, a noted Thief & Burglar for Burglary, sentenced to be hanged; secondly upon Fortune an abandoned Negro who set Fire to the Warehouses at End Long Wharf 19th Feb^r which did Damage £5,000 ster. & endangered the Conflagration of the Town, sentenced to be hanged: Thirdly upon V. Lawton for perjury in swearing to an account which he had falsely forged against another, sentenced to the Pillory. . . . And then the Jews were called up to hear their almost equally mortifying Sentence and Judg^t which dismissed their Petition for Naturalization. Whether this was designedly or accidental in proceeding upon the Business of the Court I do not learn. But this I remark that Providence seems to make everything to work for Mortification to the Jews & to prevent their incorporating into any Nation; that thus they may continue a distinct people. Tho' the Naturalization Act passed the Parliament a few years ago, yet it produced such a national Disgust towards the Hebrews, that the Jews themselves joyned in Petition to Parliament to repeal that Act, & it was therefore repealed for Britain. And tho' it was continued by way of Permission in the Plantation, upon seven years Residence, yet the Tumult at New York in procuring the Taking place of their Natural~there; and the opposition it has met with in Rhode Island forbodes that the Jews will never become incorporated with the pple. of America, any more than in Europe, Asia and Africa.

March 18, 1762."

NOTES ON MYER HART AND OTHER JEWS OF EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA.

BY GUSTAVUS N. HART, *Philadelphia.*

The name of Myer Hart, of Easton, Pennsylvania, having been mentioned several times in recent *Publications* of this society, the writer thought it would be of interest to many to learn more of this man, and also something of his son, Michael Hart.

Myer Hart and his wife Rachel were one of the eleven original families that are classed as the founders of Easton, Pennsylvania, about 1750. The town was surveyed by Wm. Parsons in that year. In a letter dated December 8, 1752, he says there were then eleven families living in the town, probably forty men, women and children, listed as follows :*

Wm. Parsons,	. . . . .	Clerk of Court, &c.
Louis Gordan,	. . . . .	Lawyer.
Henry Allshouse,	. . . . .	Carpenter.
Abraham Berlin,	. . . . .	Smith.
Nathaniel Vernon,	. . . . .	Ferryman.
Wm. Craig and John Anderson,	. . . . .	Tavern Keepers.
Paul Miller,	. . . . .	Tavern Keeper.
Ernest Becker,	. . . . .	Baker.
Anthony Esser,	. . . . .	Butcher.
John Finley,	. . . . .	Mason.
Myer Hart,	. . . . .	Shopkeeper.

An early and interesting effort towards free education in this town of then small population, is shown by Rupp in his *History of Northampton County.*

There is a list of contributors of money, labor and material for the erecting of a free school. Myer Hart's name

* M. S. Henry's *History of Lehigh Valley.*

heads the list of those furnishing material; this paper is dated July 31, 1755.

This pioneer merchant of Northampton County appears to have thriven, in spite of the fact that Easton at that time was little more than a frontier stockade, and Indian massacres at this point were of frequent occurrence.

The following, which is quoted from M. S. Henry's *History of the Lehigh Valley*, confirms the above, although he does not fully understand this unusual prosperity.

On page 63 of his work, he states that: "Last but not least of the eleven original settlers mentioned by Mr. Parsons is Myer Hart, the shopkeeper; what the worth of his stock was in 1752, is not stated, but in 1763 his county tax was nineteen shillings, being more than that of any other man in Easton; at this time he owned three houses, several negroes, besides his stock in trade.

"In 1782 his goods are valued at £439 (\$1200). It may be supposed that in 1752 the value of his stock may have been about \$300 to \$500. What it consisted of is difficult to determine.

"In 1755 he furnished twenty pounds of nails towards the building of the school house. The nails were then worth about twenty cents per pound (being wrought nails).

"It seems very doubtful whether Miss Grace Parsons or Miss Elizabeth Gordon could be furnished with silk dresses and hundred dollar shawls from his stock of trade, and besides this, Miss Parsons wore plainer materials than these when she rode as express for her father to Philadelphia with a letter to the governor in 1755, when the inhabitants were almost momentarily in expectation of being murdered by the Indians. Mr. Parsons tells us that he had not the money to send his daughter." This trifle seems to give Mr. Henry much annoyance and doubt. However, Myer Hart was unquestionably in direct communication with large importers at the various seaports and could, if required, furnish

the necessary silk dress and shawl of which Mr. Henry speaks.*

Myer Hart's name appears on the tax lists of 1762, 1767 and 1773, with the amounts £50, £60 and £45, respectively, affixed opposite the same.†

In the list of taxable inhabitants for 1763 Myer Hart is noted as an inn keeper. In 1780 his estate was valued at £2095 and that of Michael Hart, his son, £2261—these two being the heaviest taxed individuals in the county.‡ At this period there were two other Jewish merchants residing at Easton; Barnard Levi and Jos. Nathan.

Myer Hart was naturalized April 3, 1764.§ From the tone of the following resolutions he evidently had some trouble with his co-religionist, Barnard Levi, and also with the county authorities.||

The committee of public safety organized December 21, 1774, passed a resolution under date of August 12, 1776, to consider a complaint of Myer Hart against *Barnet* Levi. The following extract from the *Colonial Records*, vol. XII, page 75, shows that the case was a stubborn one.

“A petition of Myer Hart of Easton, complaining of the sheriff of the county of Northampton not executing process directed to him by the justices to remove a tenant from his possession.

“At a meeting of Supreme Executive Council—Philadelphia, Wednesday, August 17, 1779—Ordered, That the petition be referred to the courts of law for his remedy in this case.”

The result of this litigation I am unable to ascertain.

Myer Hart took charge of the prisoners in the British service, on or about September, 1777, according to a document

* See foot note, *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.* No. 2, p. 66.

† Original Tax lists of Northampton Co. in possession of *Penn. Hist. Society at Phila.*

‡ Peter Fritt's *Hist. of Northampton County.*

§ *Penn. Archives*, vol. II.

|| M. W. Cordit's *Hist. of Easton.*

dated March 19, 1778, presented by Mr. Mendes Cohen to the American Jewish Historical Society.*

Under the act of assembly passed March 1, 1780, abolishing slavery in Pennsylvania, it was obligatory upon the owners of slaves to register them. Appearing upon this list are the following Jewish names:

Myer Hart, 1, Michael Hart, 2; Levi Barnet,† 1.

The name of Myer Hart appears upon the records of the Mickve Israel congregation of Philadelphia, as a member of that congregation September 17, 1782,‡ and the name can also be found in the first Philadelphia directory, 1785, "Myer Hart, gent. Dock B, 2d and Walnut."

This is very likely the same person, from the fact that the county records show that he made assignment in the early part of 1782 to "Wm. Wister, Alex. Todd & Tench Coxe" of Philadelphia.§

His estate was sold by sheriff in September, 1786. Records also show that he must have resided in Philadelphia from 1782 until the time of his death about 1795, according to the wording of a deed dated February 4 of that year.

Michael Hart, son of Myer Hart, was born in the year 1738. He was a resident of Easton from the beginning of its history up to his death.

From all accounts he was brought up a stout orthodox Jew by religion, and a merchant by trade. His first wife's name was Leah, born 1754, died July 4, 1786. Mr. Henry, in his *History of Lehigh Valley*, gives the following interesting account of him. "Myer Hart had a son named Michael, who about the commencement of the Revolutionary War commenced a store at Easton in the southeast corner of the Great Square."

* See *Publication No. 3*, of this Society, p. 151.

† This name is perhaps reversed. I am indebted to Mr. M. S. Henry's work for the list.

‡ Morais' *Jews of Philadelphia*.

§ Northampton County Records.

The gentleman, from the impediment in his speech, was called the "stuttering Jew," which used to enrage him very much.

An anecdote was related of a country woman, who going into his store and not knowing Michael, asked him if he was the "stuttering Jew"; at this he became very angry. The woman ran out of the store into a tavern, on the western side of the street in the rear of Titus' store, where she hid herself. Michael following into the house in a great rage, required the landlord to let him see her, which was prudently refused.

Among* the names on the Muster Roll, dated August 6, 1776, of Captain Hagenbuck's Company, second battalion, Northampton County, Province of Pennsylvania, appears that of Michael Heart, Corporal. This is without doubt one of the frequent errors of misspelt names or bad writing occurring during this period.

It is evidently intended for Michael Hart. I find no record of a similar name in the county at that time.

The above company was a portion of what was known as the Flying Camp commanded by Colonel Hart.

In a foot note on page 82 of Henry's work, he states that "the valuation of real estate was trifling and much below its real value in 1782. Michael Hart's house was rated at £500, continental money (then 75 for one), being near ten dollars, others as low as 15 to 75 or \$100; or from 50 cents to \$3 each."

The first fire company to organize at Easton, was formed on January 19, 1807, composed of thirty-five citizens of that town.

Among the names given are Naphtali Hart and Wm. Barnet, heading the list with the titles of engine directors; Michael Hart and Chris. Hartzell as guardsmen, and that of Jacob Hart is among the numerous engineers.† Michael

* Penna. Archives, 2d ser., vol. XIV.

† M. S. Henry's *History of Lehigh Valley*.

Hart died March 23, 1813, and was buried in the John street burial ground, but was afterwards removed to the Washington street cemetery, where his remains now rest in peace.

Jacob Hart, son of the above by his first wife Leah, was born about 1775; he is mentioned in several of the county records as an Indian trader. On March 25, 1800, Michael Hart deeded to his son Jacob, certain property on Northampton and John streets, a part of what was first granted to Michael Hart by John and Richard Penn. The aforesaid property was deeded to the said Jacob for a Jew's burial ground.*

The *Pennsylvania Herald and Easton Intelligencer* for December 7, 1808, has an advertisement signed by "Michael Hart & Son" for the sale of hops; this appears in several issues. Another in 1809, for the sale of cotton. In the same paper, under date of May 31, 1809, is an advertisement mentioning "The Jacob Hart Distillery, near John Barnett's Mill." Mr. E. A. Weaver, an excellent authority on the history of Easton, and one who has written much concerning its past, informs me that the Hart family was one of the earliest and most respected families in the county, and that his own grandfather, who was born 1791, was for a time a clerk in the store of Hart Brothers. This firm consisted of the sons of Michael Hart—most likely Jacob and Naphtali. Esther Cohen, daughter of Rev. Jacob Raphael,† and Mrs. Cohen was the second wife of Michael Hart. Louisa B. Hart was a daughter by this marriage. She was born June 3, 1803.‡

There are a few old tombstones to be found at the burial grounds on Washington street near Twelfth, now unused. These were removed from the John street ground about

* Northampton County Records.

† See *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 2, p. 5, foot note.

‡ See Morais' *Jews of Philadelphia* for the names of other children of Michael Hart.

1842. Some of the inscriptions are undecipherable. Among the oldest are :

Jonas Barnet, born July 29, 1784, died August 31, 1847.

Leah, wife of Michael Hart, died 17th day Tammuz, A. M., 5547—July 4, 1786, age 32.

Michael Hart died March 23, 1813, age 75.

Rachel Hart, daughter of Michael and Esther Hart, born March 1, 1800, died January 5, 1845.

Henry S. Hart, son of Michael and Esther Hart, born April 10, 1796, died 1841.

Louisa, wife of Abraham L. Hart, born August 31, 1792, died December 24, 1814.

The above mentioned Abraham L. Hart was a merchant residing at Belvidere, New Jersey. He married Louisa, daughter of Nathan Barnett, about October 11, 1813.*

There is a marriage settlement made and recorded on this date; Naphtali Hart was trustee, and his wife Elizabeth and Eleazer Cohen were guardians of Louisa, Jonas Barnett being a brother.

The first congregation of Easton was founded in the year 1839, and chartered under the name of "Covenant of Peace," November 25, 1842. The charter members were Henry Rosenfeld, Michael Lederer, Solomon Rhode, Samuel Backenheimer, Meyer Gardiner, Wolf Newburger, Emanuel Schiff, Isaac Menlein, Moses Cohen, Solomon Scheid, Samuel Able, Adolph Hirsh and Lewis Backeheimer.†

The first rabbi was Manis Cohen and their synagogue was located on south Sixth street.

* County Records.

† County Records.

SOME REFERENCES TO EARLY JEWISH CEMETERIES IN NEW YORK CITY.

BY ELVIRA N. SOLIS, *New York.*

It is not the purpose of these notes to present a history of the early Jewish cemeteries in New York City ; that ground has been well covered by Judge Daly, in *The Settlement of the Jews in North America*, and by the later researches of the American Jewish Historical Society.* But it was thought that it might be of interest to bring to the notice of members an article relating to these early burial places of the Jews, and briefly to point out the significance of what appears to be new in the references. This article, a copy of which is appended, was found in an old scrap-book. It was originally printed in the *Jewish Messenger*, of July, 1859, and was one of several letters published over the signature of G. N. (Mr. Gershom Nathan, of New York),† concerning the early history of the Jews in New York city. All the letters are worthy of attention in that they show by the numerous facts accumulated in them, that there were Jewish students then actively engaged in investigating the sources of American Jewish history ; and they also indicate the lively interest taken by the Jews, at that time, in the history of their growth in the community.

The statement in the article in question that in conveyances of real estate made by Jews, and acknowledged before proper officers, oaths were taken upon the Five Books of

*The writer is indebted to Max J. Kohler, Esq., of New York, for a number of the references.

† Gershom Nathan, who was son of Seixas Nathan, died in New York, 1864.

Moses (after the manner of the Jews), is interesting as pointing out an instance, under early English rule, in which the Jews were permitted to exercise liberty of conscience. It may also indicate that the Jews were of sufficient importance in the community to insist, in legal affairs, that their form of oath should be officially recognized; for in the certificate on the deed of 1728, noted in the appended article, it is expressly stated that Da Costa (a Jewish witness) was sworn upon the Five Books of Moses (according to the manner of the Jews), while Nicholls (a Christian witness) was sworn upon the "Holy Evangelists of Almighty God."

It may not be out of place to refer, in this connection, to an act passed by the Colonial Legislature of New York, in 1727, which provided that Jews, taking the oath of abjuration, might omit "upon the true faith of a Christian." While the two facts are not related in any way, they suggest the probability that the same forces were at work in seeking to procure religious toleration.

Mr. Nathan's view that there was an earlier cemetery than the supposed purchase of 1681, based, as he states, upon having read of monuments bearing date 1672, has been proved correct by facts brought to light in the past few years.* It is now generally known that in 1656 the first grant of land was made to the Jews for a burial ground. This land has been located as being near the site of the old Oliver Street ground of the congregation Shearith Israel in New York. Judge Daly, in his description of the early burial place, from the time of the grant in 1656 to its enlargement in 1729, and again in 1755, does not refer to the purchase of 1681.† Mr. N. Taylor Phillips, a recent writer on this subject, states that the grant in 1656 was extended by purchase in 1681.‡ In a short account of the history of

* Cf. Daly: *Settlement of Jews in North America*, pp. 15, 16; also *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 3, pp. 76 and 77.

† *Settlement of Jews in North America*, pp. 15, 16, 33, 44.

‡ *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 6, p. 125, note; also No. 1, pp. 91, 92.

the congregation Shearith Israel, published in 1854, reference is made to the purchase of 1681 as being, as far as known, the first Jewish cemetery.* It would seem, therefore, that there was a strong tradition in the congregation (if not actual proof in the records), that this plot of land purchased by the congregation in 1681, which adjoined the grant of 1656, was used for a burial ground. The description clause in the deed of purchase of 1729† reads, as pointed out by Mr. Nathan, that on “the S. E. corner it was bounded by the Jews burying ground,” and the question naturally suggests itself, if the deed of 1681 could be found, may it not show, in its boundary descriptions, that it adjoined and extended the land of the original grant?

The writer has been unable to discover Mr. Nathan’s authority for the date 1672, previously mentioned as the date of the earliest monument. Reference is made in *The Settlement of the Jews in North America* to tombstones dated 1678,‡ and in No. 1 of our *Publications* an interesting account is given by Mr. Phillips of what is believed to be the oldest memorial stone now in existence, marking a Jewish grave, in New York City, which bears the date 1683.§ But it is fair to suppose that there was trustworthy evidence in support of the fact referred to, for in a later letter published by Mr. Nathan, he defended the statements in his articles and claimed, in proof, that he possessed “records going back to 1634, and very interesting events from 1650 to the Revolution.”

Attention is called to one more statement—that of the Gold Street purchase of 1728.|| The supposition that these lots were never used as a cemetery has been established.

* *Jewish Calendar*, 1854, Rev. J. J. Lyons.

† Deed referred to by Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, pp. 33 and 34; also *Menorah Monthly*, July, 1892.

‡ Page 42, note 46.

§ Pages 91, 92.

|| Cf. Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, pp. 34, 43; *Pub. Am. Jewish Hist. Soc.*, No. 6, p. 128.

APPENDIX.

UNTOMBING THE PAST.

Editors of *The Jewish Messenger* :

Our subject to-day is one in which every Hebrew feels a deep interest. . . . We shall in our article to-day refer to the earliest Jewish burial ground in this City on record in the Register's office, although we are satisfied that this is not the first one, for in our researches we have read of monuments bearing date of 1672, and we have it on record that there were in 1655* Jews in this City who desired to be enlisted as soldiers, and that in 1695 there was a congregation of twenty families.† In another article we will give you the Hazanim and some of the electors' names and business pursuits. Another strong point is, that we have conveyances of real estate in 1678 by Jews, and acknowledged by proper officers, that they made oath upon the Five Books of Moses, after the manner of the Jews. We find that the purchase of the Gold Street burial ground was July 26, 1728, and in our next we will also find that the Oliver Street was donated December 17, 1729, by the Gomez family, not two years intervening between the two purchases. It is undeniable that there was a piece of ground purchased for a burial ground in Gold Street, but is it known it was so consecrated? I have my doubts. The question naturally arises, Where were the Jews buried antecedent to the Gold and Oliver Street purchases? for if we take our earliest date on record of Jews residing in this City, that is from 1655 to the first supposed purchase of Beth Haim in 1681, we have a void of twenty-six years.

We shall find in the succeeding notice—that of the Oliver Street ground, donated as above, that in giving its boundaries it reads 'on its S. E. corner it is bounded by the

* Cf. Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, pp. 16, 17.

† Congregation of twenty families referred to by Daly. *Ibidem*, p. 27.

Jews burying ground,' proving incontestably there was another burial ground adjoining the new plot. This would locate the ground on the corner of Madison (late Bancker) and Oliver Streets. This is supposed to have been purchased in 1681. This has been called the first Beth Haim; if it was the first where were our ancestors buried who died prior to its purchase? In some future essay we will endeavor to locate the first burying ground, or find the correct time of purchase of the one on the corner of Madison and Oliver Streets, and as we desire to go back only twenty-six years, the task is not altogether hopeless. No doubt the old books of record at Albany would throw considerable light on our early history. As it may be a matter of interest as well as instruction to some of your readers, we will give you a transcript in part of the Gold Street deed.

Yours, etc.,

G. N.

'THIS INDENTURE, made the 26th day of July, in the second year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, George the Second, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., Anno Dom. 1728, between Grace Levy, of the city of New York, widow, Nathan Levy, Isaac Levy, Jacob Franks and Judah Mears, of the same place, merchants, executors of the last will and testament of Moses Levy, late of the said city, merchant, deceased, of the one part, and Lewis Gomez, of the city of New York, aforesaid, merchant, Trustee for the Inhabitants of the said city, being of the Jewish religion, of the other part.' Recites ownership of said Moses Levy of two Lotts or Tofts of ground on Gold Street, denoted on map of partition of lands of William Beekman, deceased, by Nos. 84 and 85, being in front on street 50 feet, in rear 48 feet, and in length on each side 112 feet, and that 'the said Moses Levy being so seized did in his lifetime, on or about the 13th of June, now last past, make his last will and testament in writing, and therein and thereby did direct and empower his executors to sell and dispose of all his real estate whatso-

ever, and did constitute and appoint the aforesaid parties of the first part' executors.

The said executors, 'in consideration of the sum of £46, 13s. of lawful money of the Province of New York, to them in hand paid by the said Lewis Gomez (but raised by a voluntary subscription of the inhabitants of New York being of the Jewish religion) at or before the sealing and delivering hereof, receipt whereof they do hereby acknowledge, . . . Have granted, bargained, sold, released, enfeoffed and confirmed and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell, release, enfeoffe and confirm unto the said Lewis Gomez, his heirs and assigns forever,' the aforesaid two Lotts or Tofts of ground 'with all and singular the easements, profits, commodities, hereditaments and appurtenances whatsoever to the same belonging.'

'TO HAVE AND TO HOLD . . . unto the said Lewis Gomez, his heirs and assigns forever, IN TRUST, nevertheless, to be and remain forever hereafter for a burying place for the Inhabitants of the city of New York, being of the Jewish religion, and to and for no other use, intent or purpose whatsoever.'

The parties of the first part executed the deed and then follows this acknowledgment:

'Memorandum that on the 9th day of January, A. D. 1728, personally appeared before me, Robert Lurting, Esq., Mayor of the city of New York, and one of the Masters of the High Court of Chancery for the Province of New York, Daniel Nunes da Costa, of the said city, merchant, and Richard Nicholls, of the same place, gent, witnesses to the within deed; and the said Daniel Nunes da Costa, being sworn upon the Five Books of Moses (according to the manner of the Jews) and the said Richard Nicholls, being sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, did declare that they were present, and did see Grace Levy, Jacob Franks, Nathan Levy, Isaac Levy, and Judah Mears sign, seal and execute the within deed as their voluntary act and deed to the use therein mentioned.' "

PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN 1840.

BY JACOB EZEKIEL, *Cincinnati*.

From my scrap-book I am enabled to present these important documents relative to the persecution of the Jews at Damascus, being the correspondence on that subject by the Israelites at New York, and Richmond, Va. Although upward of half a century has elapsed it may be perused with much interest, and will serve to show that at that time, the President of the United States gave precipitate and unsolicited expression of sentiment to the Ottoman Government, which would have been well worthy of imitation during the recent crisis of the persecution of our brethren in Russia.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW YORK, *August 24, 1840.*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY MARTIN VAN BUREN, *President of the United States.*

Sir:—At a meeting of Israelites of the City of New York, held on the 19th inst., for the purpose of uniting in an expression of sympathy for their brethren at Damascus, and of taking such steps as may be necessary to procure for them equal and impartial justice, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That a letter be addressed to his Excellency, the President of the United States, respectfully requesting that he will direct the Consuls of the United States, in the

* Cincinnati, Nov. 28th, 1897.

Dominions of the Pacha of Egypt, to co-operate with the Consuls or other agents accredited to the Pacha, to obtain a fair and impartial trial for our brethren at Damascus.

In transmitting the same to your Excellency, we beg leave to express what we are persuaded is the unanimous opinion of the Israelites throughout the Union, that you will cheerfully use every possible effort to induce the Pacha of Egypt to manifest more liberal treatment toward his Jewish subjects, not only from the dictates of humanity, but from the obvious policy and justice by which such a course is recommended by the intolerant spirit of the age in which we live. The liberal and enlightened views in relation to matters of faith, which have distinguished our Government from its very inception to the present time, have secured the sincere gratitude and kind regard of the members of all religious denominations, and we trust the efforts of your Excellency in this behalf will only serve to render more grateful and to impress more fully on the minds of the citizens of the United States, the kindness and liberality of that Government under which we live.

With the best wishes of those in whose behalf we address you—for your health and happiness, and for the glory and honor of our Common Country, we have the honor to be,

Your Excellency's obedient servants,

J. B. KURSHEEDT, *Chairman.*

THEODORE J. SEIXAS, *Secretary.*

COPY OF REPLY FROM THE HONORABLE THE SECRETARY
OF STATE.

WASHINGTON, *August 26, 1840.*

MESSRS. J. B. KURSHEEDT, *Chairman*, AND THEODORE J.
SEIXAS, *Secretary.*

Gentlemen:—The President has referred to this Department your letter of the 24th inst., communicating a reso-

lution unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Israelites in the City of New York, held for the purpose of uniting in an expression of sentiment on the subject of the persecution of their brethren in Damascus. By his direction I have the honor to inform you that the heart-rending scenes which took place at Damascus had previously been brought to the notice of the President by a communication from our Consul at that place, in consequence thereof, a letter of instructions was immediately written to our Consul at Alexandria, a copy of which is herewith transmitted for your satisfaction.

About the same time our Charge d’Affairs at Constantinople, was instructed to interpose his good offices in behalf of the oppressed and persecuted race of the Jews in the Ottoman Dominions, among whose kindred are found some of the most worthy and patriotic of our own citizens, and the whole subject, which appeals so strongly to the universal sentiment of justice and humanity, was earnestly recommended to his zeal and discretion. I have the honor to be, gentlemen,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN FORSYTH.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE SAME TO JOHN GLIDDON, ESQ.,
UNITED STATES CONSUL AT ALEXANDRIA.

WASHINGTON, *August 14, 1840.*

JOHN GLIDDON, ESQ., *United States Consul at Alexandria,
Egypt.*

Sir:—In common with all civilized nations, the people of the United States have learned with horror, the atrocious crimes imputed to the Jews of Damascus, and the cruelties of which they have been the victims. The President fully participates in the public feeling, and he cannot refrain from expressing equal surprise and pain, that in this advanced age, such unnatural practices should be ascribed to any

portion of the religious world, and such barbarous measures be resorted to, in order to compel the confession of imputed guilt; the offences with which these unfortunate people are charged, resemble too much those which, in less enlightened times, were made the pretexts of fanatical persecution or mercenary extortion, to permit a doubt that they are equally unfounded.

The President has witnessed, with the most lively satisfaction, the effort of several of the Christian Governments of Europe, to suppress or mitigate these horrors, and he has learned with no common gratification, their partial success. He is moreover anxious that the active sympathy and generous interposition of the Government of the United States should not be withheld from so benevolent an object, and he has accordingly directed me to instruct you to employ, should the occasion arise, all those good offices and efforts which are compatible with discretion and your official character, to the end that justice and humanity may be extended to these persecuted people, whose cry of distress has reached our shores. I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOHN FORSYTH.

MEETING AT RICHMOND, VA.

RICHMOND, VA., *September 4, 1840.*

At a meeting of the Executive and Corresponding Committee of the Israelites of Virginia, a communication was read from our worthy and much esteemed brethren, J. B. Kursheedt and Theodore Seixas, Chairman and Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Israelites of New York, relative to a correspondence between them and the Hon. John Forsyth, Secretary of State, on the subject of our persecuted brethren in the East, whereupon the following resolution was adopted :

Resolved, That a letter be addressed to the President of the United States, expressing the acknowledgments of the Israelites of Virginia in common with their brethren throughout the United States and elsewhere, for the prompt and handsome manner in which he has acted in reference to the persecutions practised upon our brethren of Damascus.

And the Rev. A. H. Cohen, G. A. Myers, Samuel Marx, and Samuel H. Myers were appointed a sub-committee to carry the said resolution into effect.

A. H. COHEN, *Chairman*,
JACOB EZEKIEL, *Secretary*.

RICHMOND, *September 4, 1840.*

HIS EXCELLENCY, MARTIN VAN BUREN, *President of the United States.*

Sir:—In performing the duty assigned them under the annexed Resolution, it may well be supposed that it is with sentiments of the highest gratification, that the undersigned, in common with their brethren here and elsewhere, have recognized, in the voluntary act of the Chief Magistrate of this Great Republic, in behalf of the persecuted Jews of the East, an act alike honorable to him as an individual and as a high public functionary, and which assures to us his sympathy in whatever may hereafter be attempted or done toward extending to the ancient race of Israel, wherever dispersed, the civil and religious privileges secured to us by the Constitution of this favored land.

Accept, Sir, from us and through us from the Israelites here, our heartfelt thanks for what you have done—thanks, which we are sensible can add but little to, but certainly will not subtract from, the feelings which your own approving conscience will suggest. We have the honor to be, Sir,

With great respect, Yours,

A. H. COHEN, G. A. MYERS,
SAMUEL MARX, SAMUEL H. MYERS,
Committee.

NOTES.

The following are taken from originals in the Library of Congress :

“Journey of a passage from New York to Boston” Dec. 3 to Dec. 13, 1786.

Newport . . . Wednesday 5th Decemb^r 1786 Mr. W^{ms} called to see a Mr. Lopez, a Jew, descended from an eminent Jew merchant formerly of this place, who unfortunately was drowned watering his horse some years since. He bore a most respectable, unblemished character and was universally esteemed. At Mr. Lopez’ counting house I wrote a letter

“NEW YORK, May 11, 1774.

“The Mechanicks of this city are requested to meet, this evening, at 7 o’clock, at the house of David Philipse, in Horse and Cart street, on business of the utmost importance.”

In a fragment of a volume containing the partial minutes of the Masonic Lodge of Savannah for 1756–7 I find that Daniel and Moses Nunes were Master Masons, and in one place are stated to have been admitted in Georgia in 1733–4. At one meeting of the Lodge Moses Nunes is recorded as absent “in Indian Natⁿ.”

On one occasion the fact that Abraham Sarzedas presented a petition for the second time is noted, though the nature of the petition is not stated. On another, David Nunes and Abraham Sarzedas accompanied the Lodge when its members waited on the Governor (Ellis) to present an address.

The meetings of the Lodge were held at the houses of the members and among the entertainers was David Nunes.

“LANCASTER (Pa.), 12 Sept., 1777.

“We the subscribers promise to pay Paul Zantzinger & Mr. William Alter the several sums of Money to our names annexed to enable them to hire one or more Proper Persons to ride between Lancaster and general Washingtons army with & for intelligence.

(1) p ^d Joseph Simon	p ^d P. Z. . . .	£1.10.0
(2) p ^d Barnard Gratz	p ^d P. Z. . . .	1.10.—
(8) p ^d P. Z. L And ^{ew} Levy	. . . .	0.15.0
(11) p ^d P. Z. Levy Marks	. . . .	1.10.0
(12) p ^d P. Z. Myer Solomon	. . . .	1.10.0”

Among the manuscripts in the Library of Congress are several letters from Levy Andrew Levy and Joseph Simon to Ephraim Blaine, the ancestor of the distinguished James G. Blaine. They date from 1766 to 1773, and relate in the main to business affairs. They are all written from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and one dated December 25, 1770, and another July 16, 1773, read as signed, “in behalf of my Uncle Jo^s Simon.”

H. F.

NECROLOGY.

The death at Philadelphia, on November 12, 1897, of the Reverend Sabato Morais, LL. D., removes from among the living to an honored place among the immortal names of history, one of the foremost figures in the Jewish community of America. Born at Livorno, Italy, on April 13, 1823, and spending a few years of early manhood in London as Hebrew Master of the Orphan's School, Dr. Morais was, for forty-seven years, Chazan and Lecturer of the Congregation Mickvé Israel of Philadelphia. He was Professor of Biblical Exegesis in the Maimonides College at Philadelphia during the years of its existence; and from its foundation to his death, a period of nearly twelve years, was Professor of Bible and the President of the Faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary at New York; instructing some of its pupils at his own residence in Philadelphia, and making frequent visits to New York, often at times of severe bodily suffering and at great physical strain, for the purpose of fulfilling the responsible duties of his position.

In addition, throughout his whole life he gathered about him young men and women whom he instructed in Hebrew literature, and, just before the fatal stroke, had been so engaged in the study of Hebrew poetry with a favorite pupil. He was active in all manner of philanthropic and educational work. In his profound and intimate knowledge of the Hebrew language he was without a peer in modern times. This, with his learning in Jewish history, literature and traditions, his sterling character and his zeal as a teacher made him an ideal representative of the Jewish scholar, while his stirring advocacy of freedom for all oppressed peoples, Jew or Gentile, white or black, in the Old World or in the

New World, his association with Mazzini in the work of Italian liberation and unity, no less than his ardent support of the Union during the dark days of civil strife in the United States, or his devotion to the cause of the persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe, stamped him as a true type of the patriot. He could love the people of his blood and faith, the land of his birth, the country of his adoption, nor yet forget for these his brotherhood for all mankind. Of his work and worth as a teacher and exemplar of religion, this is not the place to speak; but for the constant, self-sacrificing and loving labors that he devoted to the material and moral amelioration of the poor and needy among his brethren, and especially of the recent immigrants from oppressive countries, this Society may well record its appreciation.

His loss, to the Jews of America is great beyond expression. The tributes rendered by the secular and religious press to his life, his character and his work sufficiently testify to the grief, not alone of those within the immediate sphere of his personal influence, but of all who knew his name, and evidence the universality of the esteem felt for this Old Man Wonderful; but, more than all, the silent sorrow of the thousands of the humble and the wretched who thronged the streets through which was carried the dead body of their friend, or walked behind it on its last journey; or at the place of burial sadly waited its coming, tells the story of a life of constant self-effacing good by a soul beautiful and true.

Our successors will find among the men of the passing generation none more worthy of their loving study, their emulation and their honor, as scholar, as teacher, as Jew, as American, as man, than Sabato Morais.

S. SOLIS-COHEN.

On May 3, 1897, there died in New York a man widely known and beloved in Jewish circles—Louis Schnabel, Superintendent of the Baron de Hirsch English Classes.

He was born on June 29, 1829, at Prosnitz, Moravia. At the age of twelve he left home and was a student at various Yeshibas, also acquiring Latin. In 1847 his first articles appeared in the *Kochbe Yitzchak*. In the fall of that year he was summoned home to his father's death-bed, and was shortly after appointed teacher of the Talmud Thora in his native city. In 1849 he accepted a position as private tutor in Boskowitz, and subsequently went to Vienna, where he attended the University until 1854. While there he composed many clever parodies on famous German poems. He next went to Paris where he remained until 1863, teaching in Dr. Derenbourg's Institute for Boys, and in Madame Cahn's Girls' School. Here, too, he began his career as a journalist, contributing to many Jewish papers. Upon the advice of Dr. Neubauer he accepted a position as tutor in a private family in America. In 1869 he became Superintendent of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York, in which he effected many improvements. Here, too, he established a magazine, *Young Israel*, which existed for eight years. He resigned his position in 1875 and became Principal of the Preparatory School for the Hebrew Union College. He wrote a number of Ghetto stories, published afterwards in book form, under the title "Vögele's Marriage and Other Tales," besides writing regularly for various Jewish papers. He was the Hebrew instructor of Emma Lazarus.

In 1890 he took charge of the English Classes for Russian Immigrants, established by the Baron de Hirsch Fund.

Jacob Sulzberger, the youngest son of the late Abraham Sulzberger of Philadelphia, was born at Heidelberg, Baden, January 1, 1845, and was brought to Philadelphia on the immigration of the family in 1849.

He was educated in the public schools, taking his degrees of A. B. and A. M. in the Central High School of that city.

Though engaged in mercantile pursuits, he devoted much attention to English literature and was especially familiar with poetry and the drama. Of his poems the only one published was "The Story of David, the Singer," which appeared in the *Jewish Exponent* of October 1, 1897. He belonged to a number of literary clubs, and rendered valuable service to the Jewish Publication Society in the revision of some of its early publications.

In the year 1893 his health began to fail, and though it was hoped that a six months' sojourn in Europe in 1895 might restore him, he returned in the fall of that year a confirmed invalid. He died on September 14, 1897.

INDEX.

- Abarbanel, David Dormido, 6, 96.
 Able, Samuel, 133.
 Aboab, Isaac, 6.
 Abrahams, Mrs. Selena, 46.
 Adams, John Q., 85 f.
 Adler, Dr. Cyrus, 77 f., 83 f.
 Aguilar, Grace, 55.
 Alexander, Joseph, 47.
 Allen, Hon. Lewis F., 85, 98.
Allgemeine Zeitung des Juden-
thums, referred to, 82, 83 f.
Alliance Israelite Universelle, 82.
 Allshouse, Henry, 127.
 Alter, William, 148.
 Ambrosius, Moses, 11 f.
 America, "referred to in the Old
 Testament," 3.
 Anderson, John, 127.
 Andrade, Grand Rabbi of Bor-
 deaux, 112.
Anglo-Jewish Bibliography, re-
 ferred to, 77 f.
Anglo-Jewish Exhibition Catalogue,
 referred to, 77 f.
 Antony, Allard, 32 f.
 "Ararat" project, 85, 97 ff.
Army and Navy Magazine, The,
 referred to, 59, 61, 73 f.
Atwater's History of Ohio, refer-
 red to, 43 f.
 August II of Poland, 79.

 Backenheimer, Lewis, 133.
 Backenheimer, Samuel, 133.
 Barnet, Jonas, 133.
 Barnet, William, 131.
 Barnett, Jonas, 133.
 Barnett, Nathan, 133.
 Barsimson, Jacob, 14 f.

 Bayard, Nicholas, 18.
 Bayart, Balthasar, 18 f.
 Baxter, Wallace, 116.
 Becker, Ernest, 127.
 Beecher, Lieutenant Frederick
 H., 66, 69.
 Beekman, William, 139.
 Berlin, Abraham, 127.
 Bird, William A., 99.
 Blaine, Ephraim, 148.
 Blaine, James G., 148.
 Block, Elinor, 53.
 Block, Louisa, 53.
 Block, Simon, 51.
 B'ne Israel Congregation of Cin-
 cinnati, organization of, 49.
 Brewster, Elder, 27.
 Brodhead, referred to, 9 f., 13 f.
 Bruce, 123.
 Buckingham, Solomon, 47.
 Busch, Rev., 122.
 Busnac, Abraham, 112.

Calendar of New York Historical
MSS., referred to, 9 f., 10 f.,
 13 f., 16 f.
 Carigal, Rabbi Hayim Isaac, 119,
 121, 124.
 Castelar, Señor Emilio, 2, 4.
 Champlain's *Works*, quoted, 26 f.
 Chapin, Seth, 103.
 Charles II, 97.
Christian Intelligencer, quoted,
 36 f.
 Cincinnati, first Jewish Ceme-
 tery of, 54.
 first Synagogue, building of, 53.
 Organization of first Jewish
 Congregation, 49.

- Clay, Mrs. Henry, 43.
 Cohen, Rev. A. H., 145.
 Cohen, Eleazer, 133.
 Cohen, Esther, 132.
 Cohen, Lewis, 45.
 Cohen, Rabbi Manis, 133.
 Cohen, Mendes, referred to, 130.
 Cohen, Moses, 133.
 Cohn, Abraham, 20.
 Cohn, Albert, 82.
 Cologne, Abraham de, Grand Rabbi of Paris, 86, 112.
Colonial Records, quoted, 129.
Colonial Records of Connecticut, referred to, 21 f., 22 f.
 Copal, Jan, 21.
 Corcos, Rev. Joseph M., referred to, 6, 7.
 Cordit's *History of Easton*, referred to, 129 f.
 Cordoza, Hon. Aaron Nunez, 112.
 Corwin's *Manual of the Reformed Church in America*, referred to, 31 f.
 Coster, Joseph de, 14.
 Cowyn, Jacob, 14 f.
 Craig, William, 127.
 Cremieux, Adolphe, 82.
 Cresson, Warder, and his project of Jewish Colonization, 81 ff.
 Cromwell, 5, 96, 97.
 Cuia, Abraham La, 14 f.
 Cumming, Rev. Dr., 119.
 Curaçao, history of Jews of, 6.
 plan of a Jewish Colony in, 76.
 Custer, 65.
 Da Costa, 136.
 Da Costa, Samuel Nunes, 140.
 Daly, *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, referred to, 13 f., 14 f., 16 f., 17 f., 19 f., 23 f., 76, 80, 85, 87 f., 135, 136 f., 137, 138 f.
 Damascus, persecution of the Jews of, 141.
 Dandrade, Salvador, 14 f.
 Davenport, W., 21.
 Derenbourg, Dr., 151.
 DeWitt, Lackman & DeWitt, 41.
 Dexter, Prof., 120.
Documentary History of New York, quoted, 30 f.
Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York, referred to 9 f., 10 f., 13 f., 16 f.
 Dormido. See Abarbanel.
 Douglas, Major, 62.
 Drake and Mansfield, quoted, 43, 49.
 Dutch in America, attitude of, toward the Jews, 9.
 Dyer, Albion Morris, referred to, 19.
Egerton MSS., referred to, 77, 91.
 Elizur, Isaac, 124-126.
 Esser, Anthony, 127.
 Evertsen, Wessel, 18 f.
 Fernow, B., referred to, 11 f.
 Ferris, 116.
 Finley, John, 127.
 Fonseca, Joseph Nunez de, 76.
 Forsyth, General G. A., 59, 65 f.
 Forsyth, John, 143 f.
 Fortune, Negro, 126.
 Franks, Jacob, 139.
 Frederick the Great, 79.
 Frera, David, 14 f.
 Fritt's *History of Northampton County*, referred to, 129 f.
 Fry, General James B., 59, 73.
 Gans, Dr. E., 112.
 Gardiner, Meyer, 133.
 Genebrardo, quoted, 3.
 George II, 139.

- Gliddon, John, U. S. Consul, 143.
 Gomez family, 138.
 Gomez, Lewis, 139 f.
 Gordan, Louis, 127.
 Gordon, Miss Elizabeth, 128.
 Gradis, Benjamin, 112.
 Grand Island, plan of a Jewish State on, 85, 100.
 Gratz, Barnard, 148.
 Guiana, plan of a Jewish settlement in, 77, 91.

 Hancock, Major-General, 61, 64.
 Harper's *Monthly Magazine*, quoted, 59, 66.
 Harris, Rev. Henry, 53.
 Hart, Abraham, 123 f.
 Hart, Abraham L., 123.
 Hart, Henry, 51, 133.
 Hart, Jacob, 132.
 Hart, Leah, 130, 132 f.
 Hart, Louisa, 133.
 Hart, Michael, 127, 129 f.
 Hart, Myer, 127.
 Hart, Naphtali, 131.
 Hart, Nathaniel G. S., 43.
 Hart, Rachel, 127, 133.
 Hartzell, Chris., 131.
 Heitman, F. B., referred to, 23 f.
 Henry's *History of Lehigh Valley*, referred to, 127 f., 128, 130 f.
 Herschell, Chief Rabbi of London, 86, 112.
 Hirsch, Baron de, 82, 150 f.
 Hirsh, Adolph, 133.
Historia del Descubrimiento de America, referred to, 2 f.
 Hobart, Bishop, 103.
 Holmes, Abiel, 120.
 Holwell, J. Z., 122.
 Hubbard, Elizabeth, 120.
 Hubbard, Dr., 124.
 Hühner, Leon, 83 f.
 Hyams, Rebekah, 53.
 Hyman, Henry, 51.

 Illan, Jan de, 76.
 Indians, fight with, described, 66 ff.
 Indians identified with the Ten Tribes, 86, 111, 120.
 Isaacs, Jacob, 124.
 Isaacs, L. S., 83 f.
 Israel, Abraham, 11 f.
 Israel, David, 11 f.
 Israel, Michael Boaz. See Cres-son.
 Israel, Phineas, 46.

 Jacobs, Joseph, 123 f.
 Jeune, Bernard Le, 51.
Jewish Chronicle, referred to, 77, 91.
 Jewish Emancipation, first practiced in British America, 97.
Jewish Exponent, referred to, 152.
Jewish Messenger, referred to, 138.
 Jewish Oath, 135 f., 138.
 Jewish State, plans of a, 76 ff.
 Jews as Colonizers, 5.
 Jews, condition of, in early New York, 9 ff.
 Jews, participation of, in the discovery of America, 3.
 Johnson, David Israel, 46.
 Johnson, Eliza, 46.
 Johnson, Frederick A., 46.
 Jonas, Abraham, 47 ff.
 Jonas, Benjamin Franklin, 53.
 Jonas, Joseph, pioneer of Ohio, 44 ff., 55.
 Jonas, Lucia Orah, 48, 55.
 Jonas, Rachel, 48.
 Jonas, Samuel, 47 ff.
 Jones, Sir William, 123.
 Joseph, Jane, 53.
 Joseph, Samuel, 47.
Journal des Debats, referred to, 86.

 Kayserling, Dr. M., quoted, 75 f., 80.

- Kieft, Governor, 33 f.
 Kip, Hendrick, 32 f.
 Kip, Jacob, 21.
 Kohler, Max J., referred to, 2 f., 135 f.
 Kohn, H., 87 f.
 Kohut, Rev. George A., referred to, 77.
 Kursheedt, J. B., 142, 144.
 Lafayette, General, 98.
 Lape. See Leib.
 Laudian, persecutions, 2.
 Lawton, V., 126.
 Lazarus, Emma, 151.
 Lederer, Michael, 133.
 Leaser, Rev. Isaac, 81, 87 f.
 Leggett, Samuel, 100, 115.
 Leib, Benjamin, 44, 54.
 Levi, Abraham, 4.
 Levi, Barnet, 45, 129.
 Levi, Hart, 55.
 Levine, Lewis, 51.
 Levy, Asser, career of, in early New York, 13 ff.
 descendants of, 22.
 Levy, Grace, 139.
 Levy, Isaac, 139.
 Levy, Jonas, 45.
 Levy, Levy Andrew, 148.
 Levy, Margaret, 22.
 Levy, Maria, 22.
 Levy, Moses, 139.
 Levy, Nathan, 139.
 Leysler, Jacob, 19.
 Liberty, how advanced, 1 f.
 Lockermans, 11 f.
Long Island Histor. Soc. Coll.,
 quoted, 26 f.
 Longworth, Nicholas, 54.
 Lopez, 147.
 Lopez, Aaron, 125 f.
 Lopez, Moses, 123 f.
 Lucena, De, 10.
 Lucena, Jacob, 21.
 Lurting, Robert, 140.
 Lyons, Rev. J. J., 137 f.
 Manasseh, Ben Israel, quoted, 3, 6.
 Manning, Capt. John, 21.
 Marius, Peter Jacobse, 21.
 Marks, Levy, 148.
 Martya, John, 11 f.
 Marx, Miss Mary, 3.
 Marx, Samuel, 145.
 Maxim, 124.
 Mazzini, 150.
 McIntyre, Archibald, 111, 113.
 Mears, Judah, 139.
 Meldola, Chief Rabbi of London, 86, 112.
 Menlein, Isaac, 133.
Menorah Monthly, referred to, 79 f., 137 f.
 Mereda, Judick, 11 f.
 Meyers, 124.
 Michaelius, 31.
 Mickvé Israel Congregation, 149.
 Miller, Paul, 127.
 Minuit, Pieter, 30, 38.
 Molemacher, François, 30, 33, 38.
 Montaigne, Joannes La, 19.
 Montefiore, Sir Moses, 82.
 Montesinos. See Levi, Abraham.
 Morais' *Jews of Philadelphia*, referred to, 130 f., 132 f.
 Morais, Rev. Dr. Sabato, life of, 149 f.
 Moritz, von Sachsen and a Jewish Kingdom, 79.
 Moses, Mrs. Annie J., 45.
 Moses, Morris, 47.
 Moses, Phineas, 47.
 Moses, Sarah, 47.
 Moses, Simeon, 47.
 Moses, Solomon, 47.
 Myers, G. A., 145.
 Myers, Samuel H., 145.
 Nassi, David Cohen, 7, 77.

- Nathan, Gershom, 135, 137, 139.
 Nathan, Joseph, 129.
 Nathan, Moses, 47.
 Nathan, Seixas, 135 f.
National Advocate, The, referred to, 98, 101 f.
 Neubauer, Dr., 151.
 New Amsterdam. See New York.
 Newburger, Wolf, 133.
 New Netherland. See New York.
 New York, early, compared with New England, 28 f.
 condition of Jews of, 9 ff.
 cosmopolitan character of, 27.
 first church, building of, 30 ff.
 Jewish cemetery of, 135.
 origin of Jews of, 10 ff.
 religious tolerance of, 27 ff.
New York Hist. Soc. Coll., quoted, 32 f.
 Nicholls, Richard, 136, 140.
 Nichols, Capt. Jno., 124.
 Niles' *Weekly Register*, referred to, 87 f.
 Noah, Mordecai M., character of, 98 ff.
 project of a Jewish State, 84 ff., 97 ff.
 Nounes, Rieke, 11.
 Nunes, Daniel, 147.
 Nunes, Moses, 147.
 Nuñez, 10.
 Nuton, Captain, 32 f.

 Oath, Jewish, 135 f.
 O'Callahan, referred to, 12 f., 13 f.
Occident, Leesers, referred to, 44 f., 45 f., 48 f., 53, 82, 83 f., 87 f.
 Ohio, first settlement of whites in, 43.
 Openheimer, Major-General L. M., 59.
Outlook, The, referred to, 37 f.

 Palestine, plan of a Jewish settlement in, 81, 88.
 Palmer, General, 62 f.
 Parsons, Miss Grace, 128.
 Parsons, William, 127.
 Pawling, Mrs. Eunice Porter Bird, 99.
 Pelletreau, W. S., 32 f.
 Penn, John, 132.
 Penn, Richard, 132.
Pennsylvania Archives, referred to, 129 f., 131 f.
 Perris and Brown, 41.
 Persecution of Damascus, 141.
 Persecutions, beneficial results of, 2 f.
 Peyster, Jchannes de, 11 f., 14, 19.
 Philippson, Dr. L., 81.
 Philipse, David, 147.
 Phillips, N. Taylor, referred to, 136 f.
 Pietersen, Solomon, 11, 14 f.
 Pluyvier, Cornelis, 20 f.
 Porter, General Peter B., 115.
 Potter, Colonel, 104.
Prince Coll., quoted, 26 f.
Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, referred to, 15 f., 16 f., 19 f., 22 f., 35 f., 38 f., 39 f., 41 f., 77, 80, 123 f., 125 f., 129 f., 130 f., 132 f., 136 f., 137 f.
Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society, referred to, 85 f., 98.

 Raphael, Rev. Jacob, 132.
Records of New Amsterdam, referred to 14 f., 15 ff., 16 f., 17 f., 18 f., 20 f.
 Rhode, Solomon, 133.
 Robinson, W. D., 80.
 Romeyn, Symon J., 20.
 Rose, Garrett Jansen, 19.

- Rosendale, Hon. Simon, referred to, 15 f., 16, 22.
 Rosenfeld, Henry, 133.
 Rothschilds, 82.
 Rupp, *History of Northampton County*, referred to, 127.
- Samuels, Rev. Joseph, 52.
 Sanzedas, Abraham, 147.
 Scheid, Solomon, 133.
 Schiff, Emanuel, 133.
 Schlesinger, Samuel, 59 f., 65, 73.
 Schnabel, Louis, life of, 150 f.
 Searle, Rev. Addison, 103, 106.
 Seixas, A. B., 102, 113.
 Seixas, Rev. Gershom Mendes, 48.
 Seixas, Theodore J., 142, 144.
 Selyns, Domine, 39, 40.
 Shearith Israel, congregation of, 84, 136.
 site of first Synagogue of, 36 ff.
 Sheridan, General, 65.
 Sherman, General, 64.
 Sherman, Jno., 126.
 Silvers, Benjamin, 51.
 Simon, Joseph, 148.
 Simson, Sampson, 82.
 Smith, Edward, 20.
 Smith, Gerrit, 101.
 Smith, Isaac, 102.
 Smith, Peter, 101, 113.
 Solomon, Myer, 148.
 Spain, failure of, in colonization, 5.
 present condition of, 2, 4 f.
 St. Clair, General, 43.
 Steelman, Jan H., 20.
 Steenwyck, 21.
 Stiles, Rev. Ezra, broad mindedness of, 119, 125.
 career of, 120.
 Hebrew studies of, 120 f.
 Stiles, Rev. Isaac, 120.
- Stuyvesant, Governor, hostility of, to the Jews, 9, 12 ff.
 Sully, 65.
 Sulzberger, Abraham, 151.
 Sulzberger, Jacob, life of, 151 f.
 Surinam, plan of a Jewish settlement in, 77 f.
 Symonds, Eliezer, 47.
 Symonds, Joseph, 47.
 Symonds, Morris, 47.
 Symonds, Philips, 47.
- Taylor, Rev. Edward, 120.
 Ten Tribes, indentified with the Indians, 86, 111, 120.
 voyage of, to America, 3.
 Thurston, 124.
 Tienhoven, Attorney-General, 32 f.
 Tienhoven, Cornelis van, hostility of, to the Jews, 10, 12, 14 f.
 Touro, Ishaak de Abraham, 7.
 Touro, Judah, 7, 82.
Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, referred to, 77 f.
- United States, plans of Jewish settlements in, 80 f.
 Upham, 124.
- Valentine's *Manual*, referred to, 10 f., 13 f., 14 f., 15 f., 17 f., 35 f.
 Van Buren, President Martin, 141, 145.
 Van Hooghten, Frans Janzen, 18 f.
 Van Swellem. See Levy, Asser.
 Van Twiller, Wouter, 31.
 Vernon, Nathaniel, 127.
 Vigné, Jean, 26 f.
 Voe, De, referred to, 15, 19 f.

- Waite, Charles H., 116.
Wassenaer's *History of Europe*,
 quoted, 30 f.
Weaver, E. A., 132.
Wilden, Simon Valentine Van-
 der, 22.
Williams, 147.
Williams, Roger, 2, 97, 119.
Williams, Thomas, 20.
Wilson, Grant, referred to, 19 f.
Wister, William, 130.
- Wolf, Lucien, referred to, 5 f., 77.
Wolf, Hon. Simon, 83 f., 87 f.
Woolf, Dr. Leo, 112.
- Yates, John B., 101, 113.
Young, Samuel J. de, 47, 51.
Young Israel, 151.
- Zantzinger, Paul, 148.
Zunz, Prof., 112.

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